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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

CONDUCTED BY

CHARLES DICKENS.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER I. SEULE AU MONDE.

THIS is Hyde Park, at the most brilliant moment in the afternoon, at the most brilliant period in the season. What a city of magnificence, of luxury, of pleasure, of pomp, and of pride, this London seems to be. Can there be any poor or miserable people—any dingy grubs among these gaudy butterflies? What are the famed Elysian fields of Paris, to Hyde Park at this high tide of splendour? What the cavalcade of the Bois de Boulogne, or the promenade of Longchamps, to the long stream of equipages noiselessly rolling along the bank of the Serpentine? Everybody in London (worth naming) is being carried along on wheels, or bestrides pigskin girthed o'er hundred guinea horseflesh, or struts in bright boots, or trips in soft sandalled prunella, or white satin with high heels. There is Royal Blood in a mail phaeton. Royal blood smokes a large cigar, and handles its ribbons scientifically. There is a Duke in the dumps, and behind him is the Right Reverend Father, in a silk apron and a shovel-hat, who made that fierce verbal assault upon his Grace in the House of Lords last night. There is the crack advocate of the day, the successful defender of the young lady who was accused of poisoning her mamma with nux vomica in her negus; and there is the young lady herself, encompassed with a nimbus of petticoat, lolling back in a miniature Brougham with a gentleman old enough to be her grandfather, in a high stock, and a wig dyed deep indigo. Is that Anonyma driving twin ponies in a low phaeton, a parasol attached to her whip, and a groom with folded arms behind her! Bah! there are so many Anonymas now-a-days. If it isn't the Nameless one herself, it is Synonyma. Do you see that stout gentleman with the coal-black beard and the tarnished fez cap? That is the Syrian ambassador. The liver-coloured man in the dingy white turban, the draggletailed blue burnous, the cotton stockings, and the alpaca umbrella, is the Maronite envoy. The nobleman who is driving that four-in-hand, and is got up to such a perfection of imitation of the manners and costume of a stage-coachman, has a rental of a hundred and thirty thousand a year. He passes his time mostly among ostlers, engine-drivers, and firemen. He swears, smokes a cutty pipe, and of his two intimate friends, one is a rough rider and the other a rat-catcher. Mr. Benazi, the great Hebrew Financier, you *must* know: yonder cadaverous, dolorous-looking figure in shabby clothes, huddled up in a corner of the snuff-coloured chariot, drawn by the spare-ribbed horses that look as though they had never enough to eat. He is Baron Benazi in the Grand-Duchy of Sachs-Pfeifigen, where he lent the Grand-Duke money to get the crown jewels out of pawn. That loan was the making of Ben. There is nothing remarkable about him save his nose, which stands out, a hooked promontory, like the prow of a Roman galley, from among the shadows cast by the squabs of the snuff-coloured chariot. That nose is a power in the state. That nose represents millions. When Baron Benazi's nose shows signs of flexibility, monarchs may breathe again, for loans can be negotiated. But, when the Benazian proboscis looks stern and rigid, and its owner rubs it with an irritable finger, it is a sadly ominous sign of something being rotten in the state of Sachs-Pfeifigen, and of other empires and monarchies which I will not stay to name.

What else? Everything. Whom else? Everybody. Dandies and swells, smooth-cheeked and heavy-moustached, twiddling their heavy guard-chains, caressing their fawn-coloured *favoris*, clanking their spurred heels, screwing their eye-glasses into the creases of their optic muscles, haw-hawing vacuous common-places to one another, or leaning over the rails to stare at all, to gravely wag the head to some, to nod superciliously to others, to grin familiarly to a select few. Poor little snobs and government clerks aping the Grand Manner, and succeeding only in looking silly. Any number of quiet sensible folks surveying the humours of the scene with much amusement, and without envy. Foreigners who, after a five years' residence in London, may have discovered that Leicester-square, the Haymarket, and the lower part of Regent-street, are not the only promenades in London, and so come swaggering and jabbering here, in their braid and their pomatum and their dirt, poisoning the air with the fumes of bad tobacco. An outer fringe of nursemaids—then some soldiers listlessly sucking the knobs

of their canes, and looking very much as if they considered themselves as flies in amber, neither rich nor rare, and wondering how the deuce they got there. As useless as chimneys in summer, seemingly, are these poor strong men done up in scarlet blanketing, with three halfpence a day spending money, and nobody to kill, and severely punished by illogical magistrates if they take to jumping upon policemen, or breaking civilians' heads with the buckles of their belts, through their weariness. Aggravated assaults, says the magistrate, as he signs their mittimus, are not to be tolerated.

Anything else in Hyde Park at this high tide of the season? Much: only a score of pages would be required to describe the scene. All is here—the prologue, the drama, the epilogue; for here is Life. Life from the highest to the lowest rung of the ladder: not only in earliest youth and extreme old age, in comely virtue and ruddled vice, in wisdom and folly, complacency and discontent; but—look yonder, far beyond the outer fringe—in utter want and misery. There, under the trees, the ragged woman opens her bundle, and distributes among her callous brood the foul scraps she has begged at area gates, or picked from gutters. There, on the sunny sward the shoeless tramp sprawls on his brawny back, grinning in impudent muscularity from the windows of his tatters in the very face of well-dressed Respectability passing shuddering by. And the whole "huge foolish whirligig where kings and beggars, angels and demons, and stars and street-sweepings chaotically whirled," the Spirit of Earth surveys and plies his eternal task. Where is my Faustus? There—I cannot read the German. Here is Monsieur Henri Blaze's French interpretation of the mystic utterances of the Esprit de la Terre, "Dans les flots de la vie, dans l'orage de l'action, je monte et descends, flotte ici et là: naissance, tombeau, mer éternelle, tissu changeant, vie ardente: c'est ainsi je travaille sur le bruyant métier du temps, et tisse le manteau vivant de la Divinité." Sufficiently weak, limp, and wishy-washy, is this French Faustus of Monsieur Henri Blaze, I wot. It savours of absinthe, and an estaminet where they charge nothing for stationery. Turn I now to another, and immeasurably greater translator:

In Being's flood, in Action's storm
I walk and work, above beneath
Work and weave in endless motion.
Birth and Death,
An infinite ocean;
A seizing and giving
The fire of living
'Tis thus at the roaring Loom of Time I ply
And weave for God the garment thou seest him by.

"Of twenty millions," asks the author of Sartor Resartus, "that have read and spouted this thunderspeech of the Erd Geist, are there yet twenty of us that have learned the meaning thereof?" But, Sage, is not the Spirit of Earth the Spirit of Nature? Is not Life the warp and Humanity the woof over which, spread on the "Roaring Loom of Time," the shuttle of production is always plying, and what is Nature: a field, a flower, a shell, a seaweed, a bird's feather, but the woven garment that we see God by?

When Humanity begins to fade out of Hyde Park, and goes home to dinner, or to brood by the ingle nook, dinnerless, or betakes itself to other holes and corners where it may languish, panting, until bread or death come; when only a few idlers are to be met in the Ring, or Rotten Row, or on the Knightsbridge road, you sometimes see a solitary horsewoman. She is Quite Alone. No groom follows: no passing dandy ventures to bow, much less to accost, or condescends to grin as she passes. A spare slight little woman enough, not in her first youth—not in her second yet; but, just entre chien et loup, between the lights of beauty at blind man's holiday time, she might be Venus. She wears a very plain cloth habit, and a man's hat. I mean the chimney-pot. She has a veil often down. Great masses of brown hair are neatly screwed under her hat. She rides easily, quietly, undemonstratively. If her habit blow aside you may see a neat boot and a faultless ankle, wreathed in white drapery, but no sign of the cloth and chamois leather riding trouser affectation. She carries a light switch with an ivory handle, which she never uses. That tall lustrous black mare never came out of a livery stable you may be sure. She pats and pets, and makes much of her, and very placidly she paces beneath her light weight. The groom keeps his distance; she is always alone: quite alone.

"Who the doose is that woman on the black mare, one sees when everybody else has left the Row?" asks Fainéant number one of Fainéant number two at the Club.

"Sure I don't know. Seen her hundreds of times. Ask Tom Fibbs. He knows everybody."

Tom Fibbs is asked, and takes a "sensation header" at a guess.

"That's the Princess Ogurzi, who was knouted at the office of the Secret Police, by Count Orloff's private secretary and two sergeants of the Innailoffsky guards, for sending soundings of the harbour of Helsingfors to Sir Charles Napier."

"Won't do, Fibbs. Try again. The Princess Ogurzi died at Spa the year before last, and the whole story about the knout turned out to be a hoax."

"Then I am sure I don't know," answers Tom Fibbs (who is never disconcerted when detected in a fiction); "I give her up in despair. I've been trying to find out who she is, for months. She is always alone; quite alone. A Brougham meets her at Apsley House, and the groom takes her mare away. I asked him one day who she was, and he called me Paul Pry, and threatened to knock me down. She dines, sometimes, quite alone, at the Castlemaine Hotel in Bond-street. The waiters think, either that she's a duchess, or that she's mad. She's the only woman who ever dined alone in the coffee-room at the

Castlemaine, but nobody dares to be rude to her. I've seen her at the Star and Garter at Richmond, at Greenwich, at Brighton, at Ventnor, in Paris, always quite alone. She's an enigma. She's a Sphinx."

"Is she demi-monde?" Thus, one Insolent.

"Nobody knows. Nobody ever presumes to speak to her, and she never was seen to speak to anybody save her groom and the waiters. She goes to the Opera; to the theatres; always quite alone. Upon my word, I think that woman would turn up at a prize fight: alone. I've seen her myself at Ascot."

As Tom Fibbs said this, a very tall angular well-dressed gentleman, with grizzled hair, and close upon fifty years of age, who had been sitting in an arm-chair close by, hastily flung down the Globe he was glancing over, darting a by no means complimentary look at Mr. Fibbs, and strode out of the room.

"I think Billy Long must know the Mysterious Stranger," languidly remarked Fainéant number one, as the door closed. "He knows all sorts of monstrous queer people, and he didn't half seem to like what Fibbs said."

"Very likely. He's a cranky fellow."

"Very rich, isn't he?"

"Disgustingly so. What he wants in parliament with twenty thousand a year, I can't make out. He never speaks, and passes most of his time in the smoking-room."

"Twenty thousand. That's a tremendous screw for a Catholic baronet."

"Yes: but he was as poor as Job till his father died. Painted pictures, or went on the stage, or turned billiard-marker, or did something low for a living, I'm told; but he's all right now."

As Thomas Fibbs, Esq., member of the Committee of the United Fogies Club, of the Turnpike Ticket Commutation Commission (salary 1500*l.* per annum, hours of business 3 to ½ past 3 P.M., 3 times a week, 3 months in the year), was selecting his umbrella from the stand about twenty minutes subsequent to this conversation, preparatory to looking in at the Burke and Hare Club, to which he also belongs, and which is younger and more convivial than the Fogies, he found Sir William Long, Bart., M.P., in the act of lighting one of those cigars which he was almost continually smoking.

"Might I trouble Mr. Fibbs," said the baronet, in a slow and rather hesitating tone, "to refrain in promiscuous conversation from hazarding conjectures as to the identity of a lady with whom I am acquainted, and who, I can assure him, is a most respectable and exemplary person?"

"Certainly—oh, certainly, Sir William," stammered Fibbs. "I meant no offence. I'm sure I didn't." And, so saying, he buttoned up his overcoat, and trotted down the steps of the Fogies considerably flurried. Sir William Long had been a member of the club for five years, and this was the first time he had ever spoken to Fibbs. That worthy, however, recovered himself by the time he reached the Burke and Hare and hinted as mysteriously as mendaciously, that "Billy Long"—he called him Billy—had told him all about the Sphinx of Rotten Row.

"No offence," murmured the tall baronet, as puffing his cigar he strode down Pall-Mall. "I dare say you didn't mean any. Mischief-makers never do, and burn down the temple at Ephesus with the best intentions in the world. Ah, Lily!" he continued, bitterly, "how long will you give all these idle tongues some grounds to tattle? How long will you persist in being quite alone?"

Still quite alone. Who was this female Robinson Crusoe? 'Tis a question which I shall endeavour in the course of the next few hundred pages to solve.

CHAPTER II. BETWEEN HAMMERSMITH AND CHISWICK-LANE.

One bright afternoon, in the summer of 1836, the whole fashionable world of London had chosen to abandon Hyde Park, Pall-Mall, Regent-street, and its other habitual resorts, and to betake itself to the flower-show at Chiswick.

Probably about one per cent of the ladies who thus patronised the exhibition of the Royal Horticultural Society cared one doit about the products collected in the conservatories and the tents. The Botanical Revival (which owes so much to Puseyism and the Tracts for the Times) was then but in its infancy; and, besides, a life passed in the contemplation of artificial flowers is not very favourable to the study of real flowers. People went to this great annual garden crush less to look at the roses in the pots than at those on the cheeks of other people; and fuchsias on their branches were at a discount with them, as objects of attraction, compared with fuchsias that grew in white satin bonnets. Yes, ladies, white satin bonnets were worn in 1836; and for dresses even that sheeny material had not incurred the cruel proscription under which it seems to languish in 1863.

But if one in a hundred among the ladies were floriculturally inclined, what shall be said of the gentlemen? Did one in a thousand trouble himself concerning roses, or fuchsias, or geraniums, or pelargoniums? It did not much matter. People went to Chiswick because other people went to Chiswick. It was the thing, and a very nice, amusing, and fashionable thing, too.

So all the jobbed horses in London were spruced up, and currycombed, and polished; and all the footmen underwent dry cascades through the medium of the flour-dredger; and all the grandees in Granductoo stepped into their carriages, and were wafted rapidly to Chiswick. What pails of water had been dashed over plated axles in hay and clover-smelling mews behind the mansions of the great! What spun-glass or floss silk wigs had been smoothed over the crania of ruddy double-chinned coachmen! What fashionable milliners had sat up all night to complete the radiant flower-show

toilettes: the subordinates wearily wishing for morning to come and the dolorous task to be got through; the principals uttering devout aspirations that their bills might be paid at the end of the season. If poor Mademoiselle Ruche, of Mount-street, Grosvenor-square, did *not* obtain a settlement of her small account (904*l.* 3s. 6d.) from the Marchioness of Cœurdesart, when the season and the session were over, and *did* in consequence go bankrupt; if the flower-show was to unhappy Miss Pincothek, the "first hand," the seed-time for the harvest which death reaped next spring; or if the night before Chiswick was to Jane Thumb, the apprentice girl, the last straw that broke the consumptive camel's back—what were such little mischances in comparison with the immense benefit which of course accrues to the community at large from all fashionable gatherings? That the few must suffer for the benefit of the many, is an axiom admitted in the conduct of all human affairs. According to the rules of fashionable polity, the many must suffer for the benefit of the few.

There could not have been a more magnificent day for the holding of a patrician festival. It had rained the preceding year, and snowed the year before that; but the show of 1836 was favoured by the elements in an almost unprecedented degree. Although the gracious Lady who now rules over this empire was then but a pretty young princess, it was really "Queen's weather" with which the visitors to Chiswick were for a brief afternoon endowed. One cannot have everything one's own way, of course, and although the sky was very blue, the sun very warm and bright, and the summer breeze very gentle, there was rebellion underfoot; and if the worm in the dust didn't turn when trodden upon, the dust itself did, even to rising up and eddying about, and covering the garments of fashion with pulverulent particles, and half choking every man, woman, and child who happened to be in the open between Hyde Park Corner and Kew Bridge.

The young ladies and gentlemen belonging to the various colleges, academies, seminaries, and educational institutions in the high road from Hammersmith Broadway to Turnham-green—for of course there could be no such vulgar things as schools in a main thoroughfare, such low places being only to be found in by-lanes where children are cuffed and kicked, and don't learn calisthenics, and have fevers, and don't have French lessons—the fortunate little boys and girls attached to those gymnasia had a half-holiday on the flower-show afternoon, just as their tiny brethren and sisters at Clapham and Mitcham are exempted from lessons and permitted to be all eyes for the passing cavalcade on the Derby Day. Their shiny well-washed faces were visible over the copings of many brick walls; their eyes shone brighter than many brass plates whereon the academical degrees of their preceptors were engraved; their pleasant countenances were embowered in green foliage, so delightfully as to make the speculative wayfarer ponder on the possibility of there having been child-trees among the horticultural phenomena of the garden of Eden; their silver laughter, and the ringing clack of their chubby hands as they smote them in applause, made the same wayfarers (if they happened to be philanthropists) hope that those argentine tones were never turned to wails of distress, nor that same sound of applause derived from cruel smacks administered by their pastors and masters. The domestic servants, likewise, along the line of road, if they had not had a half-holiday conceded to them voluntarily, took one without leave, and appeared at many up-stairs windows in much beribboned caps, and with lips ceaselessly mobile, now in admiration, now in disparagement of the male and female fashionables whom the carriages bore by. Nor were their mistresses, young, old, and middle-aged, employed in a very different manner at the drawing-room and parlour casements, from which points of espial they indulged in criticisms identical in spirit, if not in language, with those of the upper regions, and bearing mainly on how beautiful the gentlemen looked, and what frights the women were! Although, thus much must be stated in mitigation: That while they animadverted on the bad make of the toilettes, and the awkwardness or ugliness of the ladies, they did not withhold warm commendation from the quality of the garments themselves. Enthusiastic admiration for a moire antique is quite compatible with intense dislike of the lady inside it. It is one thing to like a dress, but another to like the wearer.

The lower orders were determined also to have their part in this great afternoon. All over the world, when sunshine is once given, the principal part of a festival is secured. This is why the Italians are so lazy. As it is almost always sunny in Italy, the sun-worshippers (and it is astonishing how many Ghebirs there are among Christians) are nearly always doing nothing, or celebrating Saint Somebody's festa, which is next door to it. We see so little of the sun in England, that we are bound to make the most of him whenever he favours us with an appearance. The trading classes on the road to Chiswick enjoyed their holidays according to the promptings of their several imaginations. One abandoned his shop to the care of an apprentice, and took a stroll towards the Packhorse, where he met other tradesmen similarly minded, and was, perhaps, after many admiring comments on the carriages, the horses, the footmen, and the fashionables, induced to stroll back again, diverge from the main road, and take a boat at Hammersmith Suspension Bridge for a quiet row up the river. Another (but he would be in a small way of business) gravely instructed the wife of his bosom to place a row of chairs outside his domicile, and there, enthroned with the partner of his joys and his olive-branches, would smoke his pipe and take his placid glass, exchanging the time of day and the news of the afternoon with

neighbours similarly employed, and otherwise behaving in quite a patriarchal manner. A third, with an eye to business, wafered up sanguine placards relative to tea and coffee and hot water always ready; or displayed in front of his establishment, boards on tressels covered with fair white cloths, and creaking, if not groaning, beneath the weight of half-cut hams, fruit tarts, buns, and ginger beer. For do what Fashion will to keep itself exclusive, and have the cream of things, the common people will *not* be banished from the festivals altogether. They will peep over the palings or through the chinks thereof; they will peep round the carriages and criticise the occupants; and what can Fashion, itself, do more? Often, the common see the best of the fireworks; and the music of the brass bands, coming from a distance, falls more sweetly on their ears than of those who are privileged to stand within the inner enclosure, and to be half deafened by the blasting and the braying. The purest pleasures in life are the cheapest ones. Once the writer knew a gentleman of a lively and convivial turn, but whose circle of acquaintances was limited, and who was, besides, so chronic an invalid as to be almost permanently confined to the house. At the back there was another house, almost always full of company, and where balls, supper-parties, and other merry meetings, were continually going on. It was the valetudinarian philosopher's delight to sit sipping his sassafras tea at his open window and cry "Hear, hear," with due attention to the proprieties of time and place, to the eloquent speeches, and sometimes to join in choruses when songs were sung in the convivial chambers whose lights glimmered in the distance. No pleasure could be cheaper; yet he enjoyed it amazingly. There was no trouble about dressing, about being introduced, about meeting people he didn't care for. He went away when he liked, without having to make, perhaps, a mendacious assurance to the hostess of having spent a delightful evening; and he rose next morning without a headache, or, worse still, the loss of his heart to that pretty girl in blue.

If some of the traders just glanced at did not make holiday in honour of the sun; if one crusty-looking cheesemonger denounced the whole proceedings as rubbish, and another secreted himself in his back parlour to brood over his speech at the next vestry, or Board of Guardians meeting; or if another, the worst of all, shut himself up to grumble over his books and hard times, and scold his wife and children, and curse because the people outside were enjoying themselves—what were these but the little flaws and specks that must needs be found in the brightest social diamond! If everybody were happy, what good would there be in expatiating on the blessings of happiness? It is certain, however, that the grumblers this sunny afternoon were in a grave minority. Troops of children who did not belong to seminaries or educational institutes, and perhaps came out of the by-lanes before alluded to, invaded the footway, screamed with delight at the processional pageantry, and endangered themselves, as usual, under the carriages without getting run over. It is certain that the offspring of Want very rarely enjoy a ride in Fortune's chariot, yet are they for ever hanging on behind, running close to the wheels, and diving beneath the horses' hoofs.

Many persons of grave mien and determined appearance—peripatetic, not stationary, traders—were turning the sunshine and its consequent holiday to commercial account. There did not seem any great likelihood, at the first blush, of the Court Guide, the Blue Book, the Peerage or the Baronetage, descending from their equipages to purchase lucifer-matches or knitted babies' caps, or to partake of jam tarts, gingerbread nuts, or apples three a penny; and the numbers of speculations entered into towards that end, on the footway, must have appeared to the superficial as rash in conception and pregnant with disaster. But the peripatetic merchants knew perfectly well what they were about. There was somebody to buy everything they had to sell, and they sold accordingly. Somebody was the great wandering fluctuating stream of poor people; and poor people are always buying something, and must perforce have ready money to pay for it. More remarkable was the fact that all the taverns and beer-shops on the line of road were full of guests; the men all smoking pipes and drinking beer; the vast majority of the women holding babies in one hand and Abernethy biscuits in the other. Why was this? Why is this? Why will it be so, if augury can be hazarded, in ages to come? This flower-show was not a popular gathering. The tickets were ten shillings each. The people had nothing to do with it. They just took a good long stare—not of envy, be it understood, but of lazy and listless curiosity, at the fine folks in the carriages, and then trooped into the nearest public-house for beer, tobacco, baby-nursing and biscuit-munching. There is surely a dreary sameness about the amusements of the English people; and, for aught we know, the system adopted of rigorously excluding them from anything that is to be seen, and fencing them off by barriers and reserved seats, just as though they were unclean animals, from every trumpery section of infinite space where something humanly considered grand is going on, may have been carried a little too far. Gentility has robbed the poor play-goer of his best seats in the pit, and made them into stalls. The gallery even, once specially appropriated to the gods, has now its amphitheatre stalls. The railway formula has penetrated everywhere. All is first, second, and third class, from refreshment-rooms to funerals.

Neither pit-stalls nor railway formulæ were thought much of, however, in the year '36, and the honest folk enjoying their outing, took their pipes and malt liquor, nursed their bantlings and ate their biscuits because there was nothing else

for them to do, and without asking the reason why. The present age is always asking the reason why, and may be much the better for it; —which I hope it is.

It was about five o'clock in the evening when the gardens at Chiswick were most thronged, and when a Babel of silvery tongues echoed on malachite lawn and gravel walk, that a gentleman's cabriolet of the period—a "cab," as it was very modestly named (at the risk of being confounded with the plebeian high-hung saffron-hued vehicles with a seat for the driver at one side), passed swiftly by Turnham-green, and so to the gardens of the Horticultural Society. It was a faultless cab; exquisitely appointed, shining in its every part like a pair of Wellingtons fresh home from the tip-top maker's. The tiger was a Lilliputian phenomenon, with apparently three tightly-fitting natural skins: one of leather, bifurcated for his nethers: another of pepper and salt cloth for his coat: a third of jetty-black surmounted with brown streaks for his top boots. Portions of his epidermis they must have been; for although, if artificial, he might have got them on, it was beyond the range of human possibility that he could ever get them off. Stay, an additional article must be mentioned in regard to his buckskin gloves. With shining livery buttons, with a tight little belt round his tight little waist, and a hat bound with silver cord, this domestic was surely the tightest tiger that ever was seen.

He leaped down, like an elfin groom as he was, when the cab stopped, and in three bounds was at the head of the great brown champing horse. Then the apron was flung open, and a gentleman descended, and said, "Drive back to town!" Whereupon the nimble tiger skimmed, so to speak, in the airiest manner to the vacant place, gathered up the reins in his tiny buckskinned hand, gave the whip a gentle flourish about the plated harness of the brown horse, and departed at an agile trot.

The late occupant, and, it is to be presumed, owner, of this vehicle, having been duly brushed down by one of the red jackets who had come specially from Pall-Mall for the occasion, presented his ticket and entered the gardens. He was a tremendous dandy, in an age of dandies. The Brummel type was not yet extinct. The heavy languid dragoon-like dandy, with his loose clothes, looser slouch, and pendent moustaches, had not yet made his appearance. The only things loose about the dandy, then, were his morals. The owner of the cabriolet was the brisk, alert, self-satisfied dandy of the time. The tailor, the shirtmaker, the bootmaker, the stay-maker, the hairdresser, could do no more for him than they had done. They had exhausted their faculties in adorning him. Another lappel to the coat, another curl to the coiffure, another whiff of perfume about him, and the dandy would have been spoiled. As it was, he was as perfect as a man could be with three under waistcoats, a very high shouldered higher collared coat with velvet collar and cuffs, lavender pantaloons very tightly strapped over his boots, a hat with a turned up brim, a voluminous shirt frill with diamond studs down the breast, white kid gloves, and a gold-headed cane with a long silk tassel.

Dress makes up so much of the dandiacal entity that the description of this ineffable person's countenance has been temporarily overlooked. It was worth looking at. A dandy face, but not a monkeyfied, not a simpering one. His age seemed to be between thirty and forty; but it was evident that at no very remote period he had been an eminently handsome man. His teeth were beautiful. His hands and feet were in a concatenation accordingly. He had a charming red and white complexion. His hair was black and glossy, and admirably adjusted. So, too, with his mathematically cut whiskers and chin tuft. Moustaches he had none. When he smiled, he showed the beautiful teeth a good deal; when his glove was off, he made a liberal display of the emerald and diamond rings on his dainty white hand. There was no finding any fault with the man's outward appearance, for albeit expensively dressed, and with a great gold chain meandering over his cut velvet waistcoat, and a double diamond pin in his cravat, he looked from head to foot a gentleman. It should finally be mentioned that there were two trifling drawbacks to his good looks. Across his left cheek, almost from the corner of the mouth to the eye, there ran a very deep scar, which when he talked turned livid. His eyes, too, were very colourless and sunken, and there were brownish rings beneath them. But for these the dandy would have been an Adonis.

He was evidently very well known. He stopped to speak to ladies belonging to the élite. He was asked whether he had been to the duchess's ball; whether he was going to the marchioness's rout. His replies were affirmative. He was tapped on the arm with pretty parasols and scent bottles, and scolded prettily for not having executed some commission, accepted some invitation, joined some junketing recently afoot. Clearly our dandy was very popular among the sex. Nor did the men treat him with less favour.

There came up my Lord Carlton, a wild rake of the time, and deep player, with little Harry Jermyn, his admirer, crony, toady, on his arm.

"How do, Griffin?" was his lordship's salutation. "Monsous baw stopping here. Confounded military band blows roof of one's head off. Come away, Griffin, and have a hand at piquet at my rooms in town."

"I would with pleasure," Griffin answered, "but I've a little business to transact in this neighbourhood before I return."

"Business?" echoed his lordship. "Business at a flower-show? Dooced queer place for business, Griffin. You haven't turned market gardener?"

"Il y a des fleurs animées," quoth little Mr. Jermyn. "All the Chiswick roses don't grow on bushes."

"None are growing elsewhere hereabouts for me," smiled the dandy, lifting his hat for the hundredth time to a passing party of ladies.

"Then what are you going to stop here for, when it's time to go back to town?" Lord Carlton pursued, elevating his eyebrows in pardonable amazement. "Going to look at a horse?"

"No."

"Going to dine at Richmond?"—his lordship said "Wichmond," but it would be both tedious and indecorous to give typographical expression to his defective linguals.

"No. I lunched very late, just before coming down; and if I dine at all, it will not be till night."

"Never mind, my boy, you'll get plenty of supper at Crocky's," Mr. Jermyn here cut in.

A slight cloud passed across the white forehead of the dandy, but he chased it away with an airy toss of the head.

"Of which club," he blandly retorted, "Mr. Jermyn is not, I fear, a member?"

"Got nothing but black balls," his lordship added, by way of confirmation, and with a loud chuckle. "Poor fellow, his proposer stayed away, and his seconder came from Scotland on purpose to pill him. There was one white ball, but that was from a fellow who was short-sighted, and popped his pill into the wrong side."

"Mr. Jermyn will have, I trust, better luck next time," remarked Griffin. "Had I not been in Paris——"

"At Frascati's?" interposed his noble friend.

"In Paris," he continued, taking no notice of the interruption, "Mr. Jermyn might have reckoned on my humble support. I should have been delighted to find him one of us."

"Yes, I dare say you would," acquiesced Lord Carlton. "Harry's a very good fellow, and has plenty of feathers ready to be plucked, before he is fit to be made into a compote de pigeons. You'd have given him two white balls, I'm sure you would, Griffin."

"Oh yes, I'm sure you would," repeated Mr. Jermyn. The assurance was double-barrelled—susceptible of two meanings. Mr. Henry Jermyn hated the dandy for belonging to a club to which he had himself failed to procure admittance, although he well knew that the honorary co-membership might prove in the long run costly if not ruinous. Yet he would have jumped for joy, had the exquisite addressed as Griffin offered to propose him.

"Never mind, Harry," his good-natured lordship observed. "Safe to get in next time. Can't keep you out. Besides," he added, turning to the dandy, "the fellows made a mistake after all. They took Harry for big Jack Jermyn—you know big Jack—the racing man who was in the Eighth, and levanted after Newmarket the year before last. They thought it was all up with Jack, and didn't care about having a rook in the dovecot. By Jove! If they knew that Harry was to have all his grandmother's money—how old is she, Harry?—he'd have been elected unanimously, and received with a salute of twenty-one guns."

"Mr. Crockford must have shed tears when informed of the sad truth," remarked the dandy, with sardonic politeness. "However, fortune will make amends. I hope to meet Mr. Jermyn as a fellow-member at supper in St. James's-street as soon after his grandmamma's decease as possible. And the dandy, lifting his hat for the hundred and tenth time that afternoon, strolled away.

"Monsous well-preserved man, Griffin Blunt," Lord Carlton said, looking with careless admiration after his retreating friend; "wears very well. Must be forty, if he's a day."

"He looks queer about the eyes," Mr. Jermyn ventured to observe, in mild disparagement.

"Late hours," explained his lordship, who generally went to bed about four in the morning and rose about three in the afternoon. "Griffin is a shocking night-crow."

"What do they call him Griffin for, and who is he?"

"How amazingly raw you are!" exclaimed his lordship, elevating his eyebrows in some surprise. "Don't you know that Frank Blunt goes by the name of Griffin, because he used to wear a scaly green-silk coat when he drove his curricle at the time of the Regency? Dooced queer time it must have been, too, and dooced queer fellows. Should have liked to belong to that set, only they drank so dooced hard."

"Has he any money? How does he get his living?"

"How should I know? P'r'aps he's his grandmother's heir, if he hasn't sold the reversion. You'd better ask him. He's apt to turn crusty sometimes. He got that scar on his cheek in '15, in a duel with a French dragoon officer in Paris. Griffin Blunt was in garrison at Versailles, and came up to dine in the Palais Royal, and the dragoon picked a quarrel with him about Waterloo—they were always picking quarrels, those French fellows, at that time—and Griffin knocked him down; and then they fought with sabres in the Bois de Vincennes, and Griffin had his pretty face laid open; but, by Jove! he killed the dragoon."

"And what does he do now?"

"What a lot of questions you ask! I'm not his godfathers and his godmothers. I believe he sold out after the peace, and went to India to grow indigo, or buy opium, or shake the pagoda-tree, or something of that sort. Well, he came back, and he's been on town these ten years; at least, I've known him ever since I came up from Oxford."

"Est-il mauvais sujet?" Mr. Jermyn asked.

"I believe he's about as bad as bad can be," coolly replied Lord Carlton. "He's worse than I am, and that's saying a good deal."

"And about his money?"

"Don't know anything about it. He lives high, and must spend three thousand a year. Charming little house in Curzon-street. Goes

in for deep play, and bets, and so forth; but I don't know whether he's worth twopence in the world or not."

"Is he married?"

"Married! By Jove! one would think you wanted me to say my catechism. What do I know? Griffin Blunt never said anything about his being married, and there's nobody in Mayfair who owns to the name of Mrs. Blunt. Come along."

Mr. Blunt was a squire of dames. Group after group of ladies took him up, and did not drop him after brief parley, as I am told it is the elegant but rather embarrassing custom of the ladies of the great world to do. They were sorry to part with him, for it was agreed on all sides that Mr. Blunt was most amusing and agreeable. There were some prudent mammas who looked upon him as a dangerous man, and warned their daughters to beware of him; but then it was impossible to be very severe with a gentleman who went into the very best houses, who was undeniably accomplished, faultlessly dressed, exquisitely well bred, and who could always procure a voucher for Almacks'. Besides, Blunt had the rare art, or rather the rare tact, of paying court before the world to old and middle-aged ladies. He cast himself, morally, at their feet, and overwhelmed them with attentions, as though they were in all the bloom and freshness of youth. It was only when the world was not looking that Mr. Blunt occupied himself with young people; and it was on the staircase and in the conservatory that the sleek Griffin put forth his claws. "There are always young people growing up for one," he would say, in his airy manner; "but the dowagers who have places to give and money to leave, pass away. Let us cultivate the dowager. If a man wants to get on in life, he can't do better than study the History of the Middle Ages." To which Moyen Age culture Mr. Blunt owed much of his success.

Thus, floating through the sunny crowd, went on Griffin Blunt, admired, caressed, envied by struggling tuft-hunters, who would have given their ears (long ones, and good measure) for a nod or a half-civil word from half the people he was with. When a man comes to propounding conundrums to duchesses, and promising to draw caricatures in the albums of ambassadresses, it is palpable that he must be well placed in society. "My humble proficiency in the fine arts," Blunt would occasionally say, "is worth fifty dinners, a hundred balls, and a week in each of the best country-houses, a year, to me. Of what use should I be in Dorset or Russell square? What do they know about the fine arts there, beyond the "Beauties of England and Wales," the portrait of the late Princess Charlotte, and the view of the Temple of Concord in Hyde Park? At her grace's it is quite another thing, and I go to her water-parties at Kew. My little musical accomplishments would be worth an heiress or an Indian widow to me if I were a marrying man. If I could play the violoncello, I should be invited to his Royal Highness's Wednesdays. I must learn the violoncello. Tell me where Dragonetti lives, and I will give him a guinea a lesson."

"You're an ambitious fellow, Griffin," would that shrewd novelist and newspaper writer, Whipstaff, to whom Blunt sometimes imparted these demi-confidences, remark. "You sail well before the wind, and in a short heat I'll back you to distance the best; but you've no ballast, my boy, and you'll founder. Take my advice, and if you haven't laid by for a rainy day, borrow somebody else's umbrella, and don't give it back again."

"You are an excellent moralist," thus Mr. Blunt, with a pleasant sneer. "Are you, too, ready for the wrath of Jupiter Pluvius?"

"Never mind," retorted Whipstaff, who was notoriously not worth a penny, and in dire difficulties. "Let me alone, and I shall turn up trumps yet. Every bird feathers his nest in a different manner. The wisest one after all is, perhaps, he who never troubles himself with making a nest of his own, but pops into somebody else's. There are still a few sinecures left, that confounded Reform Bill"—Whipstaff was a staunch Conservative—"notwithstanding. The wind is tempered to the shorn lamb, and the old ravens of the Treasury Bench will provide for the barrister of seven years' standing." Such was the worldly wisdom of Mr. Whipstaff, who had eaten his terms some years before at his own expense, with the firm and fixed resolve of eating a great many more terms, one day or another, at the expense of the country.

Whipstaff was at the flower-show, and remarked to several acquaintances that he never saw Griffin Blunt looking better. "How he manages it," he continued, "I can't imagine. I wish he'd give me his recipe for living at the rate of two or three thousand a year upon nothing."

"Shakes his elbow," suggested purple-faced Captain Hanger, who hated Blunt.

"Perhaps," acquiesced Whipstaff, with a sigh, "and is lucky. With me that species of paralysis has always proved the costliest of diseases."

And so the Whirligig went on in the Chiswick Gardens. Now Scandal's sirocco seized a spiteful anecdote, and twirled and twisted and sent it spinning from one end of the gardens to the other. Now it caught up a woman's reputation, and eddied it in wild hide-and-seek through the summer leaves. It was the merriest kind of word-waltzing imaginable; and never a sneer, an innuendo, a wicked bon mot, but found a partner. And in the midst of it all, the band of the Royal Horse Guards Blue brayed forth Suoni la Tromba with tremendous and sonorous emphasis. What did it all matter to them? It was their business to blow, and they blew as though they would have blown for ever. So the huntsman winds a find a check, a mort. So the

drummer beats the charge or the chamade—the advance or the retreat. I myself think that the band of the Royal Horse Guards Blue, at the Chiswick Flower Show, had the best of it. When their labour was over they enjoyed gratuitous cold meats and beer, and the bandmaster shared between them a handsome donative.

SUGGESTIONS FROM A MANIAC.

THE communication here given to the readers of this periodical reached the office of its publication under circumstances of unparalleled singularity.

An immense package appeared on the table one morning, which had been left, as was stated ingenuously outside, "on approval." It must be owned that the dimensions of the supposed manuscript were, to judge from the outside, rather alarming, but it was none the less determined that in this, as in other cases, justice should be done to the volunteer contributor. The parcel was opened. What was the surprise of "the management" to find nothing inside but an old and much worn copy of Goldsmith's Abridgment of the History of England.

The book was about to be flung aside, when Mr. Thomas Idle, who was loitering in the office at the time, happening in sheer listlessness to turn over the pages of the volume, suddenly uttered the dissyllable "Hullo." A general rush was made towards the spot from which this sound emanated, and it was then found that the volume of Goldsmith was covered, as to the fly-leaves and the margins of the pages, with manuscript written in pencil, which, when it had been deciphered with much difficulty, came out in the form of the subjoined article.

All endeavours to trace the authorship of the paper have been made in vain. It had been left at the office—this was all the information that was to be got—by a stout good-natured-looking personage, with bushy whiskers, and dressed in a shooting-jacket: who had handed the package in with a grin, and with the remark, "You won't often get anything like *that*, I'll be bound!"

The manuscript begins thus:

The straw with which my hair is decorated has failed lately to afford me the pleasure which it was wont to give. The lath which I have furbished up, and made into a sceptre, will not do, either. It was a great consolation to me at first, but it has ceased to be so now. Nothing will give me any satisfaction except the possession of pens, ink, and paper, by means of which to impart my rapidly flowing ideas to the public. Ideas! Flowing ideas! They crowd and rush into my brain, trampling on one another's heels at such a rate that I can keep them in no sort of order—and they are such valuable ideas, that they would set the whole world to rights if the whole world only knew about them.

And the world *shall* know about them. I asked for pens, ink, and paper, and they would not let me have them; but, I've got a book—what's it called?—Goldsmith's Abridgment of the History of England—and Struddles, the keeper, who is my dear friend, has lent me a pencil, and I can write all I want to say on the fly-leaves and round the margins of the pages of this book, and then Struddles promises to take it away for me and to get it published. As to the pencil point, they won't let me have a knife to cut it with, so when I've worked it down to the cedar (as if I was mad! Why see, I know what wood the lead of a pencil is set in), I give it to Struddles, and he cuts it for me; or if Struddles is out of the way, I bite the wood away, till there is lead enough bare to write with. But I must not waste my space. I want to get to my ideas at once. I am going to begin. Where shall I begin? Anywhere.

Why not raise your pavements up to the first floors of the houses. Not all the pavements in London at once (that *would* be a mad notion), but by degrees, and as opportunity offered?

Take Regent-street, for instance. Bless you, I know Regent-street well, and have often nearly been run over at that awful crossing at the Circus where it joins Oxford-street. Why not have an iron balcony the whole length of Regent-street on a level with the first-floor windows, to be used as the promenade for foot-passengers? You couldn't do it at once, but by degrees you might, beginning at the Circus. Then might a suggestion made once by a dear friend of mine (Columbus Startles) be carried out completely. His idea was, that light iron bridges should be thrown up over the crossings at the Circus, and a capital idea it was. Well, my iron balcony would be like a continuation of these bridges, or the bridges would be a continuation of the iron balcony, and so you would be able to walk straight on when you came to the crossing, and take no account of the carriages, omnibuses, and carts, roaring along underneath you. But the wiseacres who think that I have not weighed all the difficulties of my plan will say, "And pray what is to become of the shops?" My answer is ready instantly. Raise them too, and let the shop-fronts be on the first, instead of the ground floor, which should then be used for storehouses, or whatever the upper portions of the houses are used for now. Once more I repeat, you must do all this by degrees. That is the great secret. Do it gradually.

How pretty it would be as well as convenient! The balcony or iron pavement would be supported on pillars of the same metal, and would communicate with the carriage-road by occasional staircases at the crossings. All the smaller streets would be left as they are. There is no difficulty in crossing over them; and supposing you were on my raised pavement in Regent-street, and wanted to turn into Conduit-street, for instance, you would descend the staircase at the corner, on which side you liked, and would proceed along the pavement of the latter thoroughfare exactly as usual. (The pavement,

by-the-by, might remain just as it is under the iron arcade, and would be a pleasant refuge in rainy weather.)

Now something of this sort—I am not bigoted to my own scheme—but something of this sort will have to be done. Even when I was a gentleman at large, some two years ago now, I have waited and waited at some of the principal crossings in London for an opportunity of getting over, till my poor nerves got into such a state that I could hardly take advantage of the chance when it did come. Of course the thing is much worse now, and what will it be five years hence? Modern nerves are more delicate and susceptible than ancient nerves, and yet they are in some respects more severely tried. I am told that already people collect in groups at some of the London crossings waiting till the police come to their assistance. What will this come to, I ask again, five years hence?

So much for that idea. Now for the next. Let me see, what *is* the next?

When I kept house—an undertaking of such fearful difficulty, and surrounded with such severe mental trials, that my having anything to do with it is one of the causes of my being here, by mistake—when I kept house I observed, for my occupation led me to look out of window a good deal, that the street in which I resided was much frequented by a class of gentry with greasy hair, wearing caps instead of hats, with a general second-hand look about everything they had on, with villanous faces, and with bags or sacks slung over their shoulders. Sometimes these individuals carried work-boxes or tea-caddies in their hands: the boxes in question being held open, in order to show the splendour of their interiors. Now, I remarked that these men were always looking down into the areas, that they always appeared to be communicating by signs, or sometimes by word of mouth, with the servants, and that everything they did was done in a furtive and sheepish manner, very disagreeable to witness. Their communications with the servants would often terminate in a descent of the area steps, but it was always remarkable that no one of the individuals of whom I speak ever opened an area gate, or, indeed, did anything else without first glancing over his shoulder to right and left, looking first up the street and then down the street. On emerging from the area, that same look was repeated before the man would venture out into the street.

Sometimes it would happen, naturally enough, that one of these men would, in the course of his day's work—what work?—arrive at the house then tenanted by me, and, little suspecting that I was hiding behind the wire blind and listening with all my might, would go through his usual manœuvres in front of my dining-room window. Watching till one of the servants chanced to approach the kitchen window, he would try to attract her attention by gently rattling a tea-caddy against the railings, and then, attention once caught—it was easily done, Heaven knows—he would begin cajoling the women, and calling the cook "mum:" an offence in itself which ought to be visited with transportation.

"Want a nice work-box, mum—nice tea-caddy, mum?" the sneak would begin.

The servants, I suppose, answered only by signals: at any rate, I could hear nothing of their replies. The sneak looked up and down the street again, and then crouched down so as to be nearer the kitchen window. He also swung the bag off his shoulder, to be able to get at its contents.

"Nice work-box or caddy, mum! very reasonable, mum. Nice ribbings of all colours! Bit of edging, ladies, for your caps."

The telegraphing from below would seem to be in the negative, though not sufficiently so to discourage this wretched sneak. He got nearer to the gate, and again looked up and down the street.

"Make an exchange, mum, if you like! A old pair of gentleman's boots, if you've got such a thing, mum, or a gentleman's old 'at or coat, ladies. Take a'most anythink in change, ladies, if it was even so much as a humbrella, or an old weskit, or a corkscrew."

And what business, pray, had my female servants with boots, hats, waistcoats, or corkscrews, in their possession? If these articles were given to that disgusting sneak, who, at the conclusion of the last sentence quoted, made his way furtively down the kitchen steps, where could they possibly come from? Women servants do not wear coats and waistcoats and hats, nor do they generally have corkscrews *of their own* in their possession.

Why are these area sneaks allowed? They may be identified by anybody, but by a policeman especially, at a single glance. Why are they allowed to pursue their avocations? My beloved friend Featherhead here, who has continual information from outside the walls, tells me that lately several robberies have been traced to these detestable creatures. Featherhead has a bee in his bonnet, poor fellow, but he is truth itself; I can depend implicitly upon what he tells me, and it really seems to me, that if you go on allowing these area-sneaks to spend their days in wandering about the less frequented streets, corrupting the servants, and making them as great thieves as they (the sneaks) are themselves, you must be much madder than any of us poor fellows who are living——well, in retirement.

I want to know, not that this has anything to do with the last subject—why should it? I suppose I may adopt a disjointed style if I choose—I want to know why, among you outside, the young men, the bachelors, are made so much more comfortable than they ought to be? You cannot keep them out of some of their luxuries and comforts, it is true. They live in central situations at trifling rents. They take their meals at clubs, where they are provided with such food as is hardly to be obtained anywhere else. They have no responsibilities, no anxieties worthy of the name. And, as if this was not enough, what else do

you do to encourage them in celibacy? You allow them at any age to accept your hospitalities, and you expect no return, and you charge them twelve shillings only for the privilege of wearing a demi-griffin rampant on their little fingers, while the married man has to pay twenty-four. Now this, I say, is too bad. The bachelor is a selfish luxurious wretch, able to do more with three hundred a year than the family man can with three thousand. Tax him then—tax him heavily. He is young and strong, and able to endure—grind him down with taxation till he groans under the load, and then when he becomes a married man, and a worthy useful citizen, lighten his load instead of increasing it. And at the same time that we bully these selfish young dogs of bachelors, would it not be judicious to take a hint or two from them. How is it that they manage to get a maximum of enjoyment out of a minimum of expenditure? By combination. And why shouldn't married people combine as well as bachelors? Not combine socially, I don't mean that, but pecuniarily; as they already do to get their supplies of water, their gas, the books that they want to read. We ought to have club chambers for families. Great big handsome houses let off in floors. For want of these we have ruined our town; we have made metropolitan distances so vast that we want railways from one part of the town to another; we are involved, each one of us, in an enormous expenditure for which we only get the smallest amount of comfort. In the present state of society, the providing for families should be the work of a professional man. Why are you a householder, which is another name for a persecuted miserable swindled wretch?—why are you to be bothered with mysterious papers about gas-rates, and water-rates, and poor-rates, and police-rates, besides ten thousand other cares and botherations, which are at once vexatious and unworthy of your attention. Let it be the business—and a very profitable business it might be—of a professional man to take a house or houses, to attend to the rates, taxes, and repairs, and to superintend and watch its kitchen arrangements as carefully as such matters are looked after by the committee of a club.

"If you please, sir, the thor has set in and all the pipes is burst;"—"If you please, sir, the man 'ave called to see about the biler, and he says could he speak to you about it;"—"There's a party in the 'all, sir, as wishes to see you about the gas-meter, which he says a new one is wanted." Such announcements as these, together with incessant intimations that, "A gentleman has called for the pore-rate, and has been twice before," are familiar to every British householder. What bliss to hear no more allusions to such matters, and to make over a cheque once a quarter to an individual who would take all such troublesome matters off your hands for ever!

I have no space to dwell longer on this particular suggestion. I was thinking just now of something else that I wanted to say—what was it? Oh, I remember:

Why don't you improve your street conveyances? As to omnibuses, they are beyond hope. A faint attempt was made to do something with them, but it soon subsided, and you have lapsed back into your old grooves again. But don't you think something might be done with the cabs? Why not follow the plan adopted on railways, and have first and second-class cabs. According to the present arrangement, you go to the play with your wife, in a vehicle which just before has been occupied by six drunken blackguards returning from a foot race, or even by worse customers. If there were first-class and second-class cabs, such objectionable people would hail the latter, on account of the difference in price. And keeping still to the cab question, why don't you have some means of communicating with the driver without thrusting your head and half your body out of the window? Even by doing that, you can hardly make yourself heard, in a crowded thoroughfare, till you have got past the house you wanted to stop at, or the street up which you should have turned. By means of a flexible tube you might give your direction with ease, without stirring from your place, or bawling yourself hoarse. And would it be too much to ask that in close cabs there should always be a light inside after nightfall? As it is, you plunge into the interior of that dark receptacle for locomotive humanity, compelled to take your chance of plumping down upon a seat on which some inconsiderate person has just before deposited a pair of boots thickly encrusted with mud. There is a lamp *outside* the Hansom; why don't you have a lamp inside the four-wheeler? And talking of Hansoms, how is it that the public puts up with that guillotine window? We have a very nice fellow in this establishment who once broke one of those windows with his nose—the feature is a large one, and the scar is upon it to this hour. If it is not possible to make a window altogether outside the cab, allowing a good space between it and the apron for ventilation, at least the window as at present existing might be left to the management of the individual inside the cab. The majority of persons who have sense enough to find their way into one of these vehicles, would probably be capable of the mental and bodily effort of dealing with the window. But it is a curious thing, and difficult to account for, that all persons who are professionally mixed up with horses and carriages always treat you as if in all matters connected with either you were a perfect baby. I must leave this subject of Hansoms and four-wheelers. I come to my most important suggestion. It is new. It is practical. It gets us—the country generally—the government—the people—out of a difficulty. It is economical.

I have to propose a new method of rewarding merit in this country: a new way of distinguishing those among our citizens who have earned a right to our approval, and on whom it is the general wish to confer some great public evidence of our respect and gratitude. Hitherto, when we have sought to do honour to a great

man, or to render an illustrious name additionally illustrious, it has been our custom to erect a monument.

Now, my desire is to establish a system the very reverse of this. I propose that in grateful remembrance of every great man who arises among us, instead of putting up a statue, or other monument, we go to work with axe and hammer, and PULL ONE DOWN!

Here would be a stimulus to exertion! Gracious powers! who that loved his country—or rather his town—would not strain every nerve to excel in his own particular department, when the hope was before him of delivering his fellow-creatures from one of those terrific monsters, the public statues! Once let the edict go forth, once let it be distinctly understood that any man who achieved greatness might not only feel secure himself from ever appearing in one of our public places with a scroll in one of his hands, and tights on both his legs, but that he would secure to himself the glory of abolishing a London statue—once let this be understood, and I believe there would be no end to our greatness as a nation. How would the flagging energies of a virtuous rising man revive as he passed the Duke of York's Column, or George the Third's Pigtail, or George the Fourth's curly wig, and said to himself, "A little more labour, a little longer effort, and, thou monstrosity, I shall lay thee level with the dust."

Some one has remarked that we are not a military nation. From the moment when this plan of mine is adopted—as of course it will be—we shall become so. What will a man not do, what hardship will he not encounter, what danger will he not face, with the thought deep down in the recesses of his heart, that he is not only combating his country's foes, but that he is helping to lift that load of horror off the arch at the top of Constitution-hill!

From one end of our social scale to the other our whole community would feel this additional stimulus to exertion. Even the illustrious prince in whose presence it has never been my good fortune to bask, would be urged on in a glorious and virtuous career by the thought that one day the statue of his great-uncle might by his greatness be swept away from the surface of Trafalgar-square, or that his noble acts would remove another great-uncle from King William-street, where he interrupts the traffic by vainly offering a coil of rope for sale, and depresses the spirits of the passers-by in a perfectly inexcusable manner. All classes, I say, would feel this stimulus. The politician would look at Lord George Bentinck, and, shaking his fist at him, would mutter, "Thy days are numbered." The medical man would think of Jenner, and sign his prescription with a bolder hand. "Fiat pilula, ruat Jennerum!"

And consider how remarkable it is that the bronze coinage should have come into existence just at the moment when we are likely to have so much bronze thrown upon our hands. What unnumbered pennies there must be in the length and breadth of that fearful statue of the Duke of Wellington. Why, there must be change for a five-shilling-piece in his nose. The cocked-hat would be a dowry for a princess. The stirrups—but the mind shrinks before the contemplation of such wealth.

PROPOSED FORM.

To His Excellency General Lord * * * * * *,
Field-Marshal, &c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

We hasten to approach your lordship with our heartfelt congratulations on your safe arrival on these shores, and also on the success which has attended your arms in every action in which you have been engaged while defending the interests of that great country which you so adequately and nobly represent.

We are directed to convey to your lordship the acknowledgments of your gracious sovereign for the services rendered by you to your country, and we are further directed to add to the honourable titles which already adorn your name, those of:—&c. &c. &c.

But a prouder distinction yet awaits your lordship; one which it will be more glorious to you to receive, and for us to confer.

It has been decided that such services as those by which you have recently so eminently distinguished yourself, are worthy of some more marked commemoration than any which mere titles, however illustrious, can afford. We have to announce to you that it is the intention of the sovereign of this country to confer upon you the highest honour which a monarch can give, or a subject receive.

It has, doubtless, not escaped the notice of one so well acquainted with our metropolis as your lordship, that in one of its principal thoroughfares, at the entrance to one of its principal parks, in the immediate vicinity of its clubs and its Tattersall's, there exists a monster of noisome and appalling proportions, which, besides being the terror of the neighbourhood in which it is located, has disgraced the name of Britain in those foreign countries which the rumour of its existence has unfortunately reached.

This monster it has been your proud privilege to depose from his high place. An enemy to the fair name of this country, almost as much so as those other enemies over whom you have lately triumphed—that monster has fallen before your victorious approach, and beneath the spot which was once its lair may now be seen your lordship's name, in bold characters, and underneath it the simple inscription—"OVERTHROWN BY THIS PUBLIC BENEFACTOR."

As your lordship's fellow-countrymen pass that inscription in their daily walks, not only will the remembrance of the numerous exploits with which your name is associated be kept continually before them, but their gratitude towards the man who has delivered his country from a terror and a shame, will be reawakened from day to day, and from hour to hour.

Feeling that nothing we could add would give any additional value to this tribute which we

have thus the honour of offering to your lordship, we will now withdraw, wishing your lordship long life and health, and many a pleasant ride under that arch on Constitution-hill which will henceforth be always associated with your proudest triumphs and your most glorious achievements.

We are, &c. &c.
(Signed)

There! I've come to the end of the space at my disposal, and can say no more; but if you'll only send me another big book—say Hansard's Debates—I'll annotate it with suggestions by the dozen.

By-the-by, does it strike you, or any of your readers, that Oliver Goldsmith was at all mad?

THE LABOURS OF THOR.

BEING A NORSE LEGEND FROM THE PROSE EDDA.

THE path to the giants' country
Lies o'er a broad deep cliff-bound sea,
Through forest and swamp, o'er fell and moor,
And waste, and barren, stony and poor;
None since the earliest days of yore
Have crossed that sea, or stood on that shore,
Yet Thor once by a magic clue
Traversed it seeking deeds to do.

* * * * *

There was the city; it stood on a plain
Treeless and open to wind and rain.
The walls rose up and met the stars,
But its gates were guarded with triple bars.
Thor, he wrestled with beam and bolt,
Gave many a twisting angry jolt,
But in vain. So then, as a weasel creeps,
Between the stalks of the wheatsheaf heaps,
He angrily slipped; how the wise god's thought
All Loki's barriers set at nought.

He found the palace, 'twas vast and high,
With golden turrets that clove the sky,
And seeing a door wide open stand,
He entered, and saw the giant band
Seated on benches around the hall,
And Loki throned above them all.

They gravely bowed, but the king austere,
Cried, frowning, "Who is this stripling here?
The warrior Thor? let him merit his fame
By doing some deed that is fitting his name."

Loki of Utgard, that wily king,
Smiled at Thor's angry challenging,
But he arose, and his giant race,
And came to a broad and level place,
Then called to Hugi, one of his train,
To race with Thor on that grassy plain.
Tears of rage were in Thor's fierce eyes,
He ran as fast as the swallow flies,
But as the arrow the bird o'ertakes,
Swifter than fire in the dry grass brakes,
Hugi outran him and reached the place,
Then turned and met Thor face to face.
"Bravely lost," cried Loki then,
"But Hugi is fleeter than gods or men."

"Bring me a drinking-horn," cried Thor,
"I challenge you giants, one or a score."
Loki called for a walrus horn,
Thor looked at it with angry scorn.

"Bold drinker," said Loki, "now drain that cup,
In two good draughts you should toss it up.
The veriest woman, it seems to me,
Could drain that goblet in two or three."

'Twas a simple horn, long tapering,
A mere poor unshaped rustic thing.
The god was thirsty, and raised the horn
To his eager lips with a savage scorn.
A long deep draught he fiercely took,
Never stopping to breathe or look;
But still when he set the goblet down
(And Loki smiled at his wrathful frown),
The liquor lessened never a whit;
Three draughts he took, but scarce a bit
The cup was emptier; breathless, worn,
Thor gave back the giants' horn.

"Why, fie," quoth Loki, "no prize of mine
Will to day be clutched by those hands of thine."

"Try me again," quoth angry Thor,
"Try me, ye giants, with one feat more;
Though Utgard Loki may mock and laugh,
I drank a draught that no god could quaff."
"Try him," cried Loki, with crafty eyes;
"Bring him that cat our children prize.
Let us see you lift it, mighty Thor,
Though scarce so strong as we held you for."
While he spoke a large grey cat sprang in,
Whining, and purring, and struggling.
Thor took the cat in his cruel clasp,
And clutched its fur with a tiger grasp.
He strained, and grappled, and clutched each limb,
But that cat was still stronger far than him.

"Ha! Thor," cried Loki, "'tis as I thought,
The cat is stalwart, and you are nought."

"Little or big," said Thor, "I see
None who will dare to wrestle with me
Now I am wroth;" then Loki cried,
"I see none here but would tame thy pride.
Let somebody call that poor old crone,
Elli, my nurse, she will quell thee alone."

A toothless hag, with bleared red eyes,
Came hobbling in; she was old and bent,
She stared at Thor with a feigned surprise,
And lower upon her crutch she leant.
Tighter Thor held her, firmer she stood,
Firm as the oak-tree in the wood;
And she twined and grappled him slowly down,
Till at last, in spite of curse and frown,
He fell on one knee. Then the crone laughed out,
And the hall-roof shook with the giants' shout.

The next day, Utgard Loki, elate,
Led Thor out of the city gate.
Baffled and chafed was mighty Thor,
Never had he been fooled before.

"Nay," said Loki, "then know 'twas I
Who baffled thy force with my subtlety.
A cloud of magic was over thee thrown;
All those spells were mine alone.
What wonder that thou wert set at nought
By Hulgi the runner, for Hulgi was Thought!
No wonder that thou wert laughed to scorn
For failing to drain that mighty horn,
For its one end reached the bottomless sea,
A pretty draught, O Thor, for thee.
Midgard serpent that cat of ours
Foiled thy rage and thy fiercest powers.
Old Age was that lean and crippled crone,
By whom thou wert all but overthrown.

Sooner or later she lays us low,
And all of us fall beneath her blow.
Now let us part, and I'm not loth,
Come not again, or 'twere worse for both;
But if thou dost a spell shall fall,
That will hide from thee giants, city, and all."
Thor waxed wrath, and seized his mace,
But Loki had vanished, nor left a trace.
When Thor strode back to storm the town,
He only found a bare lone down.

THE SENSATIONAL WILLIAMS.

Contemporary criticism has recently been deformed by a species of cant, which, originating, as cant generally does, in a sincere feeling on the part of a few, has been echoed by the many simply because it is an effective cry. If any one writes a novel, a play, or a poem, which relates anything out of the ordinary experiences of the most ordinary people—some tragedy of love or revenge, some strange (though not impossible) combination of events, or some romance of guilt and misery—he is straightway met with a loud exclamation of "Sensational!" This foolish word has become the orthodox stone for flinging at any heretic author who is bold enough to think that life has its tremendous passes of anguish and crime, as well as its little joys and little sorrows—its strange adventures and vicissitudes, as well as its daily progresses from Brixton to the Bank, and from the Bank back again to Brixton; and who holds that the more vividly-coloured part of the grouping is as legitimate a subject for artistic treatment as the more drab-hued section. But the anti-sensational critic will tell you that, if you would write a novel or a play that is fit to be read by any one with tastes superior to those of a butcher-boy, you must confine yourself strictly to the common events of common lives, have nothing whatever to say to any of the extremes of passion or of action, leave murder to the penny papers, be ignorant of suicide, have no idea that there are dark shadows in the world, and shun a mystery as you would the measles. In short, let Brixton be your standard, the Alps being among Nature's "spasms," and therefore very improper subjects for respectable authors. Moreover, in relating the even tenor of Brixtonian existence, be careful that you are never betrayed into any emotion of style—any throb or pulse of passion in your language, any glow of description or rapid development of action—on pain of being taken to task for having shown "hectic" and "feverish" symptoms. When you have fulfilled all these conditions, then will the organs of Brixtonian criticism smile on you, and declare that you have composed "a very sweet, natural, unaffected, and thoroughly healthy tale, inexpressibly refreshing in these days of exaggerated sentiment and spasmodic plot."

Now, there can be no doubt that very beautiful and interesting fictions may be made, and have been made, out of the simplest elements of every-day life. The commonest threads of the woof of humanity have that in their composition which is capable of enlisting the sympathies of all of us; and when the humour and pathos of the most unromantic lives are drawn forth by the subtle touch of genius, we hail the result by involuntary laughter and tears. But why is all art to be restricted to the uniform level of quiet domesticity? To say nothing of the supernatural regions of imagination and fancy, the actual world includes something more than the family life; something besides the placid emotions that are developed about the paternal hearth-rug. It has its sterner, its wilder, and its vaster aspects; adventures, crimes, agonies; hot rage and tumult of passions; terror, and bewilderment, and despair. Why is the literary artist to be shut out from the tragedy of existence, as he sees it going on around him? Why is it necessarily immoral to shadow forth the awful visitations of wrath and evil and punishment, or to depict those wonderful and unwonted accidents of fortune which are just as real as anything that happens between Brixton and the Bank, only of less frequent occurrence? It is very easy to cry "Sensational!" but the word proves nothing. Let it be granted that such things *are* sensational; but then life itself is similarly sensational in many of its aspects, and Nature is similarly sensational in many of her forms, and art is always sensational when it is tragic. The Œdipus of Sophocles is in the highest degree sensational; so are half the plays of Shakespeare, at a moderate computation; so is the Satan of Paradise Lost; so is Raphael's Massacre of the Innocents; so is the Laocoon; so, one may say, are the Oratorios of Handel, since they deal with tremendous elements of suffering and wonderment, of aspiration and triumph. Whenever humanity wrestles with the gods of passion and pain, there, of necessity, is that departure from our diurnal platitudes which the cant of existing criticism denounces by this single word. It is quite true that there is a vulgar species of sensationalism, than which nothing can be worse. The halfpenny tales of murder and felony, of which a deluge is usually being poured forth, are really demoralising; for the difference between an artist who can look into the psychology of crime and terror, and the botcher who can do nothing more than lay on the carmine with a liberal brush, is so great as to be essential. In a smaller degree, it is the difference between the old playwright who, ending his tragedy with a scene of general massacre, directs that the dead bodies and scattered limbs are to lie about the stage "as bloodie as may be," and the great poet who says, through the mouth of his murderous king:

> I am in blood
> Stept in so far that, should I wade no more,
> Returning were as tedious as go o'er.
> . . . . I have supp'd full with horrors:
> Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
> Cannot once start me.

The mystery of evil is as interesting to us now as it was in the time of Shakespeare; and it is downright affectation or effeminacy to say

that we are never to glance into that abyss, but are perpetually to construct our novels out of the amenities of respectable, easy-going men and women. If the objectors would content themselves with protesting against coarse excesses, they would do good service; but, when they denounce all recourse to the more terrific elements of our life, we may not unreasonably inquire how they would have received such a play as Macbeth. Our neighbours over the water discuss "the Divine Williams." Let us, for a few moments, discuss "The Sensational Williams." Let us suppose Macbeth just published for the first time by a living author; probably this is the way in which the Sensational Williams would be "reviewed" by anti-sensational critics:

Macbeth. A Tragedy. By William Shakespeare.—Mr. Shakespeare is really becoming an intolerable nuisance, which it behoves all critics who have at heart the dignity, or even the decency, of letters, to abate by the exercise of a wholesome severity. He has no idea of tragedy apart from the merest horrors of melodrama. In his Othello, a blackamoor smothers his wife on the stage, under a preposterous delusion of jealousy, encouraged by a gentlemanly Mephistophiles of his acquaintance; and then stabs himself with a hectoring speech when he finds out his mistake. In King Lear, the accumulation of frightful and revolting atrocities is something almost beyond belief. Lear is supposed to have occupied the throne of Britain in some remote epoch beyond the dawn of authentic history. On account of a very natural and becoming answer made him by one of his daughters, he disowns her, and afterwards, for some insufficient reason, pronounces a curse upon another daughter, expressed in such frightful language that we must forbear from making any further allusion to the subject. Then he goes out on to a heath in a storm, and curses things in general, his Bedlamite ravings being varied (such are Mr. Shakespeare's notions of good taste) by the ribald jokes of a court fool, whose inanities are evidently addressed to the gallery auditors. Another character assumes to be an idiot, and with hideous jibberings makes up a pretty trio. Finally, the old king finds out that his disowned daughter is a very good girl after all, and, when she has met her death by some unlucky circumstance (as improbable and horrific as the other incidents of the play), he brings the corpse on to the stage in his arms, "howls" over it, like a mourner at an Irish wake—literally "howls," in good downright fashion—and presently gives up the ghost, to the great relief of the reader. Besides these agreeable incidents, there is a good deal of slaughtering, and one nobleman tears out another nobleman's eyes (at the instigation of two princesses), and "sets his foot" on one of them! Hamlet—which a toadying clique whom Mr. Shakespeare has gathered about him affect to regard as a work of profound philosophy and superhuman wisdom—is equally full of absurd and shocking incidents. We have the ghost of a murdered king; his murderous brother who succeeds him on the throne; a queen who marries her brother-in-law; a crack-brained young prince (whose state of mind would make him a fitting subject for a commission de lunatico inquirendo); a maundering old gentleman whom Hamlet stabs as he listens behind the arras (one of the few reasonable things he does in the whole five acts); and a young lady who goes mad, and, after doddering about with straw in her hair, singing songs that are not over-delicate, drowns herself by accident in a horse-pond. In the last scene of this hideous burlesque of nature and probability, the queen (Hamlet's mother) dies by a poisoned cup of wine; the king is stabbed, and Hamlet and an enemy of his kill each other with a poisoned foil while they are fencing. As only one of the foils is poisoned, and it is necessary to the climax that both should die at once, the two combatants contrive, by some sleight-of-hand which is quite beyond our comprehension, to exchange the weapon without meaning it! But a writer who for ever aims at startling effects must of necessity pile up the agonies in his concluding scene; and this agglomeration of fantastic crimes will the less astonish the reader when he learns that in one scene Hamlet reviles his own mother in the most dreadful manner, and in another utters profane jokes in a churchyard while his sweetheart's grave is being dug, and tosses skulls about the stage! So fond is Mr. Shakespeare of death in its most revolting forms, that even his love-story of Romeo and Juliet is full of slaughtering and poisoning; while his very comedies have generally some smack of the gallows in them.

We do not wish to be unfair on Mr. Shakespeare. He is not devoid of a certain ability, which might be turned to very reputable account if he only understood his own powers better. He has a good deal of native humour—exaggerated, indeed, to the pitch of burlesque, but undoubtedly amusing; and he possesses some knowledge of the superficial parts of character, though, being evidently no scholar, he is often ridiculously vulgar in his would-be representations of gentlemen. He would do very well as a writer of farces and of show pieces; but his injudicious friends have flattered him into the belief that he is a great tragic poet; and hence the gory nonsense of this new drama, Macbeth, of which we now proceed to give some account.

The scene is laid in Scotland, during the reign of one Duncan, of whom English readers know little and care less. The play opens, in good melodramatic (or, rather, pantomimic) fashion, with a dark scene; thunder rolling and lightning flashing, and three witches talking gibberish in rhyme. Were this last monstrosity of Mr. Shakespeare's fancy ever to be played at any theatre (which, however, is quite impossible), we can easily imagine the low tremulous murmuring of fiddles to which the curtain would

rise. Scene I., however, does not last above a minute, as it only consists of eight short lines. The second scene introduces us to the old king, Duncan, to whom "a bleeding soldier" relates the progress of an insurrection which has just been quelled by the valour of Macbeth. In Scene III. we return to thunder, witches, and gibberish. One of the old women compares herself to "a rat without a tail," and threatens to drain a certain mariner as "dry as hay," which induces us to suppose that she must be a skittle-sharper in disguise, since the draining of sailors is generally effected by those ingenious practitioners. Presently Macbeth comes in from the wars, and the witches hail him as thane of Glamis, thane of Cawdor, and future king of Scotland. Thane of Glamis he is already, but to be thane of Cawdor and king of Scotland seems to this worthy gentleman beyond the reach of thought. However, somebody comes in shortly afterwards, and tells Macbeth that, the thane of Cawdor being a traitor, the title has been transferred to the putter-down of traitors. This sets Macbeth plotting how he may become a traitor on his own account, and secure the crown for himself. He has a bold, bad woman for his wife—a strong-minded woman, who gives us to understand that she will stick at nothing to satisfy her ambition. In very plain language she invokes all the devils of the nether regions to take possession of her soul—which we dare say they were not slow in doing. We have too much respect for our readers to reproduce the dreadful things uttered by this she-dragon, perhaps the most unnatural character that even Mr. Shakespeare's lurid and unhealthy imagination has ever conceived. Suffice it to say that she eggs on her husband to murder Duncan, which, after a good deal of hesitation (proceeding rather from cowardice than conscience), and some idiotic ravings about an "air-drawn dagger," which he elegantly describes as oeing covered with "gouts of blood," he accomplishes in the dead of night, and lays the blame on the king's sleeping attendants. Afterwards he kills these attendants to conceal his own guilt, and in the next act we find him king. But Macbeth, fearing that the crown will in time come to one Banquo, and his son Fleance, commissions "two Murderers" to make away with those individuals. There is something so homicidal and Newgate-Calendarish about Mr. Shakespeare's mind, that he seems actually to have persuaded himself that there was at one time in Scotland a set of men who followed murder as a trade or profession, and to whom people applied in the ordinary course of business whenever they wished to get rid of an inconvenient rival, while feeling too squeamish or too dignified to do the work for themselves. The men in question have no names, but are simply described as "First Murderer" and "Second Murderer." Our Scottish brethren are never slow to resent an insult to their country, and we therefore confidently leave in their hands the chastisement of Mr. Shakespeare's ignorant impertinence. Well, the Murderers despatch Banquo, but manage to let Fleance escape; and in a subsequent scene we have Macbeth, his queen, and their courtiers, seated at a banquet, at which the ghost of Banquo makes his appearance with "gory locks," and sits down to table, as if he had designs upon the meat and drink. This unlooked-for visitor greatly alarms the tyrant, who "makes faces" at the spectre, foams at him, and remarks that, inasmuch as he can "nod" (which seems a strange occupation for a phantom), he may as well "speak too." The ghost prudently declines to give tongue (in this respect more merciful than the ghost of Hamlet's father, who is cruelly verbose); and Macbeth laments his liability to such visitations in this graceful and feeling manner:

> The times have been
> That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
> And there an end; but now they rise again,
> With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
> And push us from our stools.

We have no wish to invade the sanctities of private life; but we have heard that Mr. Shakespeare's father was a butcher, and we can certainly very readily believe that the son was brought up in a slaughter-house, and thus acquired a practical knowledge of what commonly results after "the brains are out," as well as a tendency to delight in sanguinary subjects.

In Act IV. we discover the three witches in a gloomy cavern, preparing a "hell broth" in a large caldron. The filthy and disgusting ingredients of this broth are inflicted on the reader with abominable minuteness; for nothing is too nasty for Mr. Shakespeare's Muse. However, it does not appear that the broth, or "gruel"—for it is described by both words—is intended for consumption, but only for conjuration. Macbeth having entered to consult the witches, "an armed head," "a bloody child," and "a child crowned, with a tree in his hand" (query, a Christmas-tree?), rise out of the caldron, as birds, bouquets, and bon-bons emerge from the magic hat of M. Robin or Herr Frikell. These apparitions address Macbeth in some highly ambiguous language, and then follows a vision of eight kings, "the last with a glass in his hand," which is unpleasantly suggestive of the Cyder Cellars at four o'clock in the morning. After this cavernous scene we are transported to the castle of Lady Macduff, where the Murderers come in again, stab a son of her ladyship, and pursue the mother, who makes her exit, crying "Murder!"—and we are afterwards given to understand that she and all her young ones and servants are slaughtered. Then comes a little breathing space between Acts IV. and V.; but no sooner is the drop scene up for the last division than we are introduced to Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep, muttering about the murder of Duncan (which by this time has been almost borne out of our remembrance by the flood of later catastrophes), feigning to wash her hands, informing us that "hell is murky," and remarking that no one would have "thought the old man to have had so much blood in him!"

The catastrophe now fast approaches, and we may hurry on to it with little ceremony. The queen dies (off the stage, we are happy to say), and, an insurrection being got up against the usurper, Macbeth is slain, after a terrific combat with Macduff, who cuts off his head (behind the scenes), and brings it in "on a pole!" Mutual congratulations, flourish, and curtain falls.

And this stuff is called a tragedy! Why, it is a rank melodrama, of the old Coburg fashion. Mr. Shakespeare is behind his time. Twenty years ago, in the days of Hicks and "Winsunt," he would have been a powerful rival to the authors who supplied the late Mr. Osbaldistone with the dramas of the New Cut. But even the most uneducated audiences have now outgrown such vulgar horrors. Does Mr. Shakespeare imagine for one moment that any theatre in London or the provinces would produce such a play as this Macbeth? It would be hissed off the boards before the end of the first act. And even should it obtain a temporary success, would not posterity explode with laughter at such a specimen of the literature of our epoch? if, indeed, posterity cared to trouble itself at all about Mr. Shakespeare and his writings. The best advice we can give this gentleman is to turn a deaf ear to his flatterers, and endeavour, if possible, to compose something quiet, simple, and natural. Though it is forbidden the genius of our nation and our language to produce an Æschylus, we may at least emulate his good taste in removing murder from the stage; and though we may never be able to scale the heights of moral grandeur familiar to the intellect of Sophocles, we can at any rate refrain from outraging decency and sense. We say to Mr. Shakespeare in plain language, "This will not do. You may think it very fine, and fools may be found to tell you so; but, however rough our speech, we are your true friends, and we repeat that IT WON'T DO!"

CHINESE KITES.

SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK remarks, in his interesting work on Japan, on the ridiculous contrariety presented in many of the habits of the Japanese to those of Western nations; how they mount their horses on the opposite side; how their carpenters plane towards the person instead of from it; how the men fly kites and spin tops while the boys look on; how their character runs from top to bottom, and their books read from right to left, and so on. Sir John Davis notices a similar peculiarity in the Chinese in his entertaining work on that people.

Perhaps of all the odd practices thus indulged in, the one most easily to be accounted for, is the practice of kite-flying by grown-up men: which may be better appreciated, when it is explained that the kites of China and Japan are not the simple articles we usually know by that name, but are toys infinitely various in sort, size, and shape, and often elaborate in construction, as well as high in price. What man among ourselves but has had his eyes attracted upward, and more or less of his interest engaged, by seeing a fire-balloon sailing in mid-air, or a sky-rocket bursting in the sky; or, indeed, anything out of the common happening overhead. And is the Chinaman or Japanese to be laughed at, if he relishes the still stranger sight of a huge dragon or centipede trailing its scaly length on high, a hideous ogre face roaring as it sails along, a pretty but immense butterfly flapping its wings like its living model, birds flying about so life-like that one can hardly believe them to be made of paper, a couple of fantastically-dressed friends walking arm-in-arm in the clouds with an umbrella over their heads, and many other similarly curious things, which an Englishman would scarcely dream of? Yet sights such as these may be seen in Japanese and Chinese cities at any time during the kite-flying season; and, while they cannot fail to attract the attention of the observant stranger, in common with the many other novelties he sees about him, lead him to conclude that the old men and adults of those countries have, at any rate, some excuse for the frivolity they are accused of. The ability to make such extraordinary kites is mainly owing to the toughness, tenuity, and flexibility, of the Chinese and Japanese paper, and the abundant material for ribs and frames afforded by the bamboo: a plant which has not its equal for the lightness, strength, flexibility, and elasticity of its fibrous wood. With these simple materials, and with the wonderful neatness and ingenuity the Chinese and Japanese are famous for, it is astonishing how rapidly and easily they construct the odd and complicated figures which they fly as kites.

Let us transport the reader to the line of low hills which, thickly strewn with the graves of the dead out of the neighbouring city of Foo-chow-foo, skirts the picturesque foreign settlement of that port, and on which some very pretty kite-flying may be seen during the season. The first thing to attract his eye (presuming it to have had its fill of the beautiful scenery to be seen around) will be the centipede kite: which, with its scaly joints stretching out some sixty to a hundred feet in length, its thousand legs, and slow undulating motion, looks marvellously like a giant specimen of that horrible creature creeping down upon one out of the clouds. Although complicated enough in appearance, it is very simply contrived; something like it might, without difficulty, be made by any ingenious English boy, who would take the trouble, and use sufficiently light materials. The Chinaman constructs it thus: He first prepares from fifty to a hundred hoops of fine split bamboo, taking care to make one-third the number he intends to use of equal diameter, say a foot and a half across, and the rest each one slightly smaller than the other, until the last is about the size of a small saucer. On these he stretches thin white or brown paper, by pasting the edges down over the hoop with well ground paste. On two opposite points of every hoop, he then fastens, with fine twine,

small bamboo pegs of about an inch in length and the size of a slate pencil; these are intended as joints on which to fix the legs—portions of the kite that need the most care and attention. To form the legs he procures a quantity of dry hollow reeds, light as a stalk of wheat or barley, and very similar to it in appearance, save that the reeds are smooth and jointless from end to end. Of these he selects the largest, longest, and best, for those of his hoops which are of equal size; and, having cut them to an equal length of from two and a half to three feet, he carefully balances them all, points one end delicately with paper, by way of socket and to prevent cracking, and fixes them on the pegs, one on either side of every hoop. For the remainder of the hoops, he selects reeds proportionately shorter and lighter, according to their several sizes. He then connects the hoops to each other at a distance of about a foot or more apart, with four pieces of twine: fastening one over, and one under, each peg, and at points equi-distant from one another on the circumference of the hoops. Having completed the series, he finishes it off with a head, representing as near as he can the ugly head and mandibles of the centipede, and thence depends the string with which the kite is flown. Thus put together, the kite extends over a good length; in order to get it up, it is necessary to take hold of it somewhere about the centre hoop, and fly the tail end first; when that rises, the body easily follows, and, once in the air with any breeze to speak of, the whole sails up as easily as any single piece of paper would do. When the time comes for the kite to be brought down, the person flying it lets it drop at full length when he gets it near the ground, so as not to tangle it; slips off the legs, which he ties up into a bundle; gathers all the hoops in their order, one upon the other; ties them round with a bit of string; slings the two packets on his shoulder, and trudges off with them through the crowded streets with as much ease and as little risk of hurting the kite as if it were a small one a foot long.

To describe all the other kites to be seen on the Foo-chow-foo hill would be to undertake too much, so we will only venture to speak of one other sort very common among the Chinese, and particularly effective as regards appearance—namely, the bird kite. The hawk or common kite is the bird usually represented, and, to make this they cut a piece of paper the exact shape and size of the natural bird, when on the wing; this, they paint the natural colour, and stretch on ribs of bamboo arranged very much in the shape of the old English cross-bow when strung, leaving the parts which represent the ends of the wing and tail feathers, unbound by twine, so as to shiver in the wind. This constructed, the kite rises with great ease, and flies with wonderful grace of motion, imitating the real bird to a nicety by now and then taking a long swoop, then soaring again, and then poising itself with a flutter before repeating the process. At times, a number of these kites are flown at once by attaching them at different intervals to the string of a centipede or some larger kite, and the effect is thereby much increased; for the real kites are in the habit of sailing in a flock together, as they circle over their prey.

In a previous part of this paper mention is made of the *roaring* of one sort of Chinese kite. It might more correctly, perhaps, be termed humming or buzzing, for the noise partakes of both those descriptions of sound. This is very simply effected by fixing across the head or shoulders of the kite, a light bow, tightly strung with a ribbon of fine hemp from one to three-eighths of an inch in breadth; the bow being so poised as to bring the flat surface of the ribbon at a right angle to the line of the string by which the kite is held, and of course at an acute angle to the direction of the wind as it blows past it. The ribbon, caught by the wind in this position, vibrates and gives forth a hum, more or less loud, according to the size of the instrument. The hum so produced may be heard at a considerable distance, when the kite is well up in the air, under a steady breeze; and it is a favourite pastime with the kite-flyers to get up this hum at all the notes and pitches their simple means can accomplish. They have another expedient to which they are very partial, that of sending up messengers after their kites, and very pretty and clever ones they succeed in making. The butterfly messenger is about the best, and it is so made that it flutters open-winged right up to the kite, whence it instantly and quickly descends: having been collapsed and closed, on coming into contact with the kite, by means of a little spring which forms part of its mechanism.

THE STORY OF THE GUNS.

Though embracing the minutest and most technical particulars, without which no account of scientific discovery can be held to fulfil its purpose, The Story of the Guns, as told by Sir James Emerson Tennent, is as full of interest as if the subject described rested, for its merits, on the author's imaginative faculties. We have met with Sir Emerson in various literary capacities, and our pages have frequently borne witness to his powers of observation and picturesque description, and here we find him adapting his scientific knowledge to the development of the most prominent and popular topic of the day. Among Sir Emerson Tennent's great qualifications for his task is the fact that, at an early age, he held a commission as an artillery officer in a foreign service during a time of war. He modestly speaks of this experience as having been acquired in the "pre-scientific period," and under circumstances which, however advantageous for observing the destructive powers of ordnance, both by land and sea, were little favourable to the study of its construction. But the work which is now, or shortly will be, in everybody's

hands, shows that no writer could be better able than he to do justice to his theme. His immediate motive for taking it up arose from his unsuccessful attempt to discover any published statement calculated to give, in the order of time and occurrence, a consecutive memoir of what has taken place since the war in the Crimea, in connexion with the improvement of rifled arms; and finding that none such existed, he was induced to compile the present volume, "in the hope to supply the want, so far as concerns the progress made in England." As we have already intimated, in The Story of the Guns that want is most ably and amply supplied.

Sir Emerson Tennent's work is divided into three parts; the first treats of "The Rifled Musket;" the second of "Rifled Ordnance;" the third bears the title of "The Iron Navy." By this division the whole subject is exhausted.

If, according to the old military saying, "every bullet has its billet," its meaning, when Brown Bess (the old regulation musket) was the weapon from which the bullet issued, must have been greatly qualified. The bullet was generally lost in space, or buried in earth, and only exceptionally found its billet in the quarters for which it was intended. At the battle of Salamanca, for instance, no more than eight thousand men were put hors de combat, although three million five hundred thousand cartridges were fired: together with six thousand cannon-balls; to say nothing of cavalry and infantry charges, so that, as regards the line, only one shot in four hundred and thirty-seven took effect. Instances of this kind might be quoted ad infinitum, illustrative of what Sir Emerson Tennent appropriately calls "the chance performances of the clumsy and capricious Brown Bess." And so little reliance had the soldier on her capabilities, even within the certified range of two hundred yards, that it was his working rule to reserve his fire until he saw the whites of his enemy's eyes, and even then it was said that, before he could bring down his man, he must discharge the full weight of his body in lead. This might very well be the case when, according to the testimony of an engineer officer who, in one of the great battles of the Peninsula, had an opportunity of witnessing the effect of musketry upon cavalry charging a square, a volley at thirty paces brought down only three men; while another officer engaged at Waterloo has stated that he could not see more than three or four saddles emptied by the fire of one side of a square of British infantry upon a body of French cavalry close to them. Witnessing these abortive performances, a general commanding, might well have joined in Corporal Trim's remark upon the Sieur Tripet's gymnastics, that "one home-thrust of a bayonet was worth them all;" and, indeed, it was "the cold steel" that generally did settle the momentous question.

But the proved inefficacy of Brown Bess was held to be no disqualification on her part,—or rather, no attempt was made when the war was over, to render her more efficient when next called upon to exhibit her capabilities; for when, in 1838, a series of experiments was undertaken by the officers of the Royal Engineers at Chatham to ascertain what the properties of the service muskets really were, though the results were perfectly ludicrous, no attempt was made to improve the weapon. Among other examples of failure on this occasion, at a target six feet wide, and eleven feet six inches high—beside which the grenadiers of the King of Prussia would have seemed like dwarfs—shot after shot was fired, from a distance of only three hundred yards, without one hitting the mark. Even a more striking instance of ineffective firing is cited by Sir Emerson Tennent. "Not very long ago," he says, "*a well trained marksman*, provided with an old regulation musket, was placed to fire at a target *eighteen feet square*, at a distance of three hundred yards, and found that he could not put even into that spacious area *one bullet out of twenty*. At two hundred yards, his success was not greater, and yet the fire-arm thus tested was the regular weapon of the British soldier so late as the year 1852." A faithful follower of routine, Brown Bess continued thus to illustrate the official principle by showing that she knew perfectly well "How not to do it."

It has been over and over again asserted that the Duke of Wellington's objection to change was the reason why no improvement in the regulation musket was attempted; but tardy justice has been done to him in this particular, and Sir Emerson Tennent observes: "So far from being opposed to the armament of troops, his personal friend and biographer, the Chaplain General of the Forces, has placed on record that the Duke of Wellington was often heard to say that 'looking to the amount of mechanical skill in the country, and the numerical weakness of our army as compared with those of the great continental powers, British troops ought to be the best armed soldiers in Europe.'" The Duke, however, did more than pronounce an opinion. When, according to his invariable rule of waiting until the success of an experiment justified the adoption of a new system, he ascertained, not only by example, but by personal inspection, that the Minié rifle exhibited a marked superiority over the old musket, he did not hesitate to recommend its introduction into the service, or to express a wish that every soldier of the line should be armed with it. Improvement (as was manifested by the adoption of the Minié rifle) was steadily kept in view by Lord Hardinge, the Duke's successor in the command of the army. But, practically acquainted with the subject, Lord Hardinge soon found that the Minié rifle, however great a triumph over Brown Bess, was far from being a perfect weapon. Its weight was excessive, it displayed many faults of construction, and the ball exhibited grave disadvantages, the principal of which are thus enumerated: "Its tendency to fouling was considerable, the distended portions of the projectile sometimes detached themselves and clogged the grooves, rendering loading ex-

tremely difficult, and occasionally the iron caps" (Sir Emerson Tennent illustrates all his written descriptions by well-executed woodcuts), "instead of merely expanding the lead, were driven completely through the opposite extremity, converting the bullet into a distorted tube, which sometimes remained firmly fixed in the barrel." Cognisant of these defects, one of Lord Hardinge's earliest measures was the institution of a comprehensive inquiry into the whole subject of rifled arms and projectiles; and by placing himself in communication with Mr. Purdey, Mr. Westley Richards, and others of the leading gunmakers in England who supplied pattern muskets of different diameters of bore; by making comparisons of the weapons in use in the armies of other military powers; by collecting information from the leading factories of Europe and the United States; by aid of the facts and suggestions so acquired; the adoption of the musket now known as the Enfield rifle was resolved on, and arrangements were made for the organisation of a government factory to be provided with the requisite machinery for shaping the various parts. "Such," says Sir Emerson Tennent, "was the origin of the Enfield rifle of 1853. It was stronger than its predecessor of 1851" (the Minié), "and at the same time the musket and its sixty cartridges weighed three pounds less. It was rifled with grooves and lands on the old system, with one turn in six feet six inches. Its diameter was .577 of an inch, and at limited ranges it fired a bullet weighing 530 grains with great accuracy and force." But, serviceable as this rifle proved—and its value was tested in the Crimean war—still it was not a perfect weapon, and numerous defects became, by degrees, apparent, which are thus stated: "The velocity of the ball proved to be lower than had been looked for; its trajectory" (the parabolic line described between the muzzle of the gun and the object aimed at) "was consequently higher, and its precision and penetration less; the tendency to foul was considerable, but what was above all embarrassing was, that *no two guns were alike in their properties and performance, although all underwent the same process, and were produced by the same means.*" Hence it was justly concluded that there must exist some subtle imperfection in the manufacture, which required for its detection the skill and experience of a master mind, and this master mind was sought in Mr. Whitworth, by general admission the greatest mechanical genius in Europe, and he who had been able to construct a machine so delicately and accurately made, as to measure objects which differ even by *the millionth part* of an inch—though not a gunmaker by profession—was equal to the great military requirement. But before he proved this, or accepted the government proposal to furnish designs for a complete set of new machinery for the Enfield establishment, Mr. Whitworth insisted upon a preliminary series of scientific experiments, in order to determine the true principle on which rifle barrels ought to be constructed: which experiments he offered to conduct, provided a shooting gallery was erected for him, under his own direction, in which to carry on the necessary trials, and thus obtain data for his guidance. Though Mr. Whitworth's offer was purely disinterested—for he demanded no compensation for his valuable time, and would rather have incurred the necessary expense himself than proceed without preliminary investigation—there was hesitation on the part of government as to its acceptance; but Lord Hardinge's energetic representations finally prevailed, and the Lords of the Treasury gave their assent to Mr. Whitworth's propositions. There were yet delays, arising from accidental causes, which intervened between the first experiments and the crowning discovery, but the secret was ascertained at last, and these are the terms in which its disclosure is stated by Sir Emerson Tennent: "The principle was found to consist in an improved system of rifling; a turn in the spiral four times greater than the Enfield rifle; a bore in diameter one-fifth less; an elongated projectile capable of a mechanical fit; and last, but not least, a more refined process of manufacture!"

Into all the details given by Sir Emerson Tennent, to show the manifest superiority of the "Whitworth" over the "Enfield" rifle, we do not enter; but we may mention some of the most striking. When formally tried at Hythe, in April, 1857, in competition with the best Enfield muskets, in the presence of the Minister of War and a large assemblage of the most experienced officers, including the superintendent of the Enfield factory, and General Hay, the chief of the School of Musketry for the army, its success was truly surprising:—in range and precision the Whitworth excelled the government musket, *three to one.* Two diagrams accompany the statement of this fact, showing the closeness of the "Whitworth" shooting as compared with the scattered shots of the "Enfield;" but here, where we have no diagram to convince the eye, we must quote the written words: "Up to that time the best figure of merit obtained by any rifle, at home or abroad, was 27; that is to say, the best shooting had given an average of shots within a circle of *twenty-seven* inches mean radius, at 500 yards distance; but the Whitworth lodged an average of shots within a mean radius of *four inches and a half* from the same distance, thus obtaining a figure of merit of 4½. At 800 yards its superiority was as 1 to 4, a proportion which it maintained at 1000 yards and upwards. At 1400 yards the Enfield shot so wildly that the records ceased to be kept; and at 1800 yards they ceased altogether, while the Whitworth continued to exhibit its accuracy as before."

The result of the trial at Hythe was the appointment of an official committee, competent to deal with the question, and of which Mr. Whitworth was himself a member. In that satisfactory and exemplary fashion which is peculiar to official committees, eighteen months were spent in de-

sultory discussions and experiments, when a lop-sided report was made, which recorded no consistent recommendation sufficient for the guidance of the Secretary at War; and although no one with eyes to see, or ability to form a judgment, could doubt the superior merits of the Whitworth rifle, the making of the Enfield musket went on with unabated assiduity. Not, however, with perfect fairness towards the inventor of the best weapon, for, in continuing to manufacture the Enfield, some of the leading features of the Whitworth were introduced, such as the reduced diameter of the bore and the increased rapidity of the rifling. Yet with all its borrowed improvements, the Enfield musket still remained inferior to the Whitworth rifle: the testimony of General Hay, the most impartial witness that could be found, being conclusive on that point. In the statement made by him, in 1860, to the Institute of Civil Engineers, he said: "There is a peculiarity about the Whitworth small-bore rifles which no other similar arms have yet exhibited; *they not only give greater accuracy of firing but triple power of penetration;* and this last property, one of the highest importance in a military weapon, was shown in the fact that the Whitworth projectile would penetrate a sandbag and a half, while the Enfield only penetrated one bag; and the same proportion existed elsewhere, the Whitworth projectile going *through* a three-foot gabion, while the Enfield only reached its middle." It appears that in every trial which has been made with the Whitworth rifle, its superiority over every other fire-arm has been conceded; and a picturesque incident, recorded by Sir Emerson Tennent, exhibits its most valuable property—precision. "At Wimbledon, in 1860, the first meeting (of the National Rifle Association) was inaugurated by the Queen in person, who fired the first shot from a Whitworth rifle, striking the bull's-eye at only *one inch and a half* from the centre, at a distance of 400 yards—a shot which, considering that it was fired in the open air, is probably the most marvellous ever fired from a rifle."

It will naturally be asked, after all these proofs—sufficient even for a Dogberry's satisfaction—why has not the Whitworth rifle been made to supersede the Enfield? The reasons adduced by the "Ordnance Select Committee," which presented its report to parliament last year, are several, but none of them conclusive. Besides the objection arising from the expense already incurred in manufacturing an *incomplete* weapon—an objection wearing the hue of the reddest of red tape—the cost is urged of altering the machinery at Enfield so as to adapt it for the production of the Whitworth: though it appears that this can be done for a comparatively small sum, and that, once effected, as Mr. Whitworth declares, the musket rifled on his principle can be manufactured at the same cost as the Enfield, "the present quality of material and workmanship being the same." It is also stated that certain wear and tear (which can be remedied) and the slenderness of the Whitworth cartridge, rendering it liable to break (which has been overcome), are impediments which retard the adoption of the small-bore rifle; but, fortunately, it appears that, to use the words of Sir Emerson Tennent, "ere long the British soldier will be animated by the consciousness of possessing an arm the most perfect that the science of his country, combined with high mechanical ability, can produce,"—the "Committee on Small-bore Rifles" having, in their report, presented to parliament in 1863, expressed their conviction as follows: "That as the tendency of the present system of musketry instruction is calculated ere long to attain a very high standard of shooting throughout the army, the introduction of a weapon of long range and great precision will naturally increase the general efficiency of infantry, and place it in a position to keep down the fire of the new rifled artillery, which is one of the creations of our own day." This passage brings us to the close of the first part of Sir Emerson Tennent's valuable book, and conducts us naturally to the subject of "Rifled Cannon," which occupies its next division.

It begins with a narrative of the earliest attempts to effect in artillery—particularly in field guns—a revolution correspondent with that which had been wrought in musketry. The idea of rifling artillery, Sir Emerson Tennent tells us, was not a new one; it had been tried in Germany a century before our time; and, as far back as 1745, in England, by Robins, the inventor of the ballistic pendulum; while Ponchara, at Paris, in 1819; Montigny, at Brussels and St. Petersburg, in 1836; and, more recently, Colonel Cavalli, in Sardinia, and Baron Wahrendorf, in Sweden; made renewed attempts; but the measure of their success was not attested by the adoption of any of their plans. Colonel Treuille de Beaulieu also made experiments in France between 1840 and 1852, but it was reserved for the gentleman who, at the later date, took possession of everything in that country—including, perhaps, a few ideas the property of other men, though he is considered "an authority in artillery"—to make the theory of rifled cannon a reality. And in the Italian campaign of 1856 it occupied that place amongst "the logic of facts" which thenceforward could never more be contested. The result of the experiments at Magenta and Solferino was "the signal for the reconstruction of all the artillery of Europe." And Sir Emerson Tennent follows up this remark by enumerating the inventions of Lancaster, Bashley Britten, Professor Treadwell (of Massachusetts), Captain Blakeley, Horsfall, and others—making observations on the respective merits of each, but reserving a full description for those of the great rivals—Armstrong and Whitworth—who have been most prominently before the British public.

A brief but very interesting memoir introduces Sir William Armstrong to the reader, and then Sir Emerson Tennent proceeds to describe the progress he made in the manufacture of

rifled artillery, after he had been first moved to the consideration of the question, by that feature of the battle of Inkermann, the bringing up of the two 18-pounder guns, which, by their superior range, effectually silenced the Russian fire. "Sir W. Armstrong," says Sir Emerson Tennent, "was amongst those who perceived that another such emergency could only be met by imparting to field-guns the accuracy and range of the rifle; and that the impediment of weight must be removed by substituting forged instead of cast-iron guns. With his earliest design for the realisation of this conception, he waited on the Secretary for War, in 1854, to propose the enlargement of the rifle musket to the standard of a field-gun, and to substitute elongated projectiles of lead instead of balls of cast-iron. Encouraged by the Duke of Newcastle, he put together his first wrought-iron gun in the spring of 1855." Of this gun Sir Emerson Tennent gives an elaborate description, accompanied by some excellent woodcuts, and fully discusses the advantages and disadvantages of breech-loading, which he considers "undoubtedly the most assailable portion of the Armstrong system," giving the substance of the opinions of the most profoundly scientific engineers as his authority for arriving at that conclusion. For the rest, the merits of the Armstrong gun were looked upon as so great, that the War-office authorities pronounced in the most decided manner in its favour—the result being expressed as follows, in the homely but forcible language of an Edinburgh reviewer: "The Armstrong gun could hit a target 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, while the (old) service gun could not be relied upon to hit a haystack." General Peel further illustrated the capabilities of the Armstrong gun, by saying, in the House of Commons, in the session of 1859, that "its accuracy at 3000 yards was as 7 to 1 compared with that of the common gun at 1000; whilst at 1000 yards it would hit an object every time which was struck by the common gun only once in fifty-seven times; so that at equal distances the Armstrong gun was *fifty-seven times* as accurate as our ordinary artillery."

But only one side of the important question had been fairly heard at the time when General Peel pronounced so decisively in favour of the Armstrong gun; nor, indeed, has a fair trial yet been made between that weapon and the invention of Mr. Whitworth. It was natural to suppose that the engineer who succeeded in manufacturing the best rifled musket, should be considered capable of rivalling any one in the construction of rifled artillery: the principle having been clearly established that what was applicable in the one case was equally applicable in the other. Accordingly, between the years 1854 and 1857, Mr. Whitworth was repeatedly solicited by the Commander-in-Chief and the Master-General of the Ordnance to extend his attention to artillery; and brass blocks were supplied to him from the royal factory, adapted to different bores, which, at the request of the government, he rifled polygonally. All of them when tried at Shoeburyness were reported on favourably. Impressed by this result, but still more so by the extraordinary performance of Mr. Whitworth's rifle, in his gallery at Manchester, in 1856, Lord Hardinge expressed the wish that he should apply the same system of rifling to heavy ordnance. This being agreed to, solid brass blocks for three 24-pounder howitzers were sent down to Manchester, to be bored and hexagonally rifled. The result of the performances of these guns when ready for trial is thus stated by Sir Emerson Tennent: "Of these one was sent for trial to Shoeburyness, where its performance was at that time regarded as something remarkable. With a charge of 2½ lbs. of powder, and at an elevation of 14½ deg., it sent an elongated projectile a distance of 3240 yards. Another was tried on April 14, 1857, in the grounds attached to Mr. Whitworth's residence, near Manchester; and a few weeks after the same gun, in order to test its range, was again tried in presence of military officers deputed by the War Office, on the sands to the north of the Mersey, a few miles from Liverpool. Up to that time, according to Sir Howard Douglas, the ordinary range of a 24-pounder, with a charge of 8 lbs. of powder, fired at an elevation of 8 deg., was 2200 yards; Mr. Whitworth's rifled gun, with a charge of only 2½ lbs. of powder, fired at an elevation of 8¼ deg., sent a shot of 24 lbs. to a distance of 3500 yards, being nearly *two* miles." And here an incident occurred which reminds us of Mause Headrigg's astonishment, when, "by the help of the Lord," she found that, mounted on a trooper's horse, she had leaped a wall. "This range so far exceeded anticipation, that sufficient caution had not been exercised in selecting a locality free from obstruction; and the shot, after striking the sand, ricochetted to the right of the line of fire, and entering a marine villa north of the village of Waterloo, it rolled upon the carpet, fortunately doing no greater damage than demolishing the window and astonishing a lady who was seated near the drawing-room fire." The third 24-pound howitzer was tried at Portsmouth, which, loaded with a flat-headed projectile of peculiar construction, displayed the singular property of maintaining its direct course *under water*, and penetrating eight inches of oak three feet below the surface; an exploit previously held (by no meaner authority than Sir Howard Douglas) to be impossible.

Up to this period (1857), Mr. Whitworth's inventions had received their due share of attention from government; but in 1858 a conjuncture arrived, the consequences of which were a diminution of the confidence previously reposed in his ability. At the close of the Crimean war, an apprehension of French invasion which England was unprepared to resist, prevailed throughout the country. It had been excited, partly by the Duke of Wellington's warning in his celebrated letter to Sir J. Burgoyne, partly by the evidence of unusual activity in the French dock-

yards and arsenals, partly by the insolence of the "French Colonels," clamouring—after Dr. Bernard's trial—to be sent to the sack of London. It was a moment of serious anxiety, and the question of ordnance was one of the earliest taken up by the Derby cabinet, then newly come into power—a report being required by General Peel, the Secretary of State for War, of the trials that had been made of the several cannon tendered for adoption into the service. Colonel Lefroy, at that time scientific adviser of the War Department on matters connected with artillery, drew up a summary, in which, after commenting on the qualities of the different guns under review, and observing that "every element was wanting on which to base a decision as to the adoption of any one system," he recommended the immediate appointment of a *Committee on Rifled Guns*, with instructions to examine, with the least possible delay, all the heavy rifled guns extant, and to render a detailed account of their respective performances and capabilities for garrison and naval service. The committee was accordingly appointed, and, having concentrated their attention on the rival claims of the Armstrong and Whitworth guns, made their report within less than three months. As if their choice had been predetermined, only a very few trials were made with the Whitworth gun, without any opportunity being given to Mr. Whitworth to be present at them. And their report stated that they found his projectiles had a large and rapidly increasing deflection to the right, which obstructed accuracy of aim; that the shot and shell used with the gun gave different ranges and different degrees of accuracy; that the shot were so liable to "jam" in loading that very careful washing and drying of the gun was indispensable after every round; and that although Mr. Whitworth had overcome this last objection by the use of lubricating wads, which "appeared to answer well," further trials, they said, were necessary to determine their sufficiency to enable washing to be dispensed with.

These conclusions were, in fact, a decision against Mr. Whitworth's gun, while on all points the report was favourable to that of Mr. Armstrong, who being on the spot was able to modify objections. Basing their report on the facility of loading the Armstrong guns, on their accuracy, and apparent durability—qualities which, in all probability, would not have been deemed exclusive, had a more lengthened and equal trial been made—they recommended "the immediate introduction of guns rifled on Mr. Armstrong's principle, for special service in the field." This report, says Sir Emerson Tennent, "bears unmistakable traces of the urgency and speed with which the members conducted their inquiry, and probably to this cause is to be ascribed an omission, much to be regretted, since it has afforded ground for complaint by Mr. Whitworth, on the score of precipitancy, and of inadequate examination into the merits of his gun, as compared with the attention bestowed on the competing one." Precipitancy, if not bias, was also shown by the committee on their refraining from visiting Mr. Whitworth's factory, *according to promise;* while they fulfilled their declared intention of inspecting the Armstrong works at Elswick. Their decision, however, was final, and the Armstrong gun was adopted, while yet incomplete, in direct opposition to the wise objection left on record by the Duke of Wellington, against the adoption of unfinished experiments, and imperfect inventions. It must, however, be stated, that it was only the light Armstrong gun which was adopted for field service—those of heavier calibre for fortifications and the navy, being left for future consideration, at the instance both of Lord Derby and General Peel.

Sir Emerson Tennent next relates the history of Mr. Armstrong's appointment of Director of Rifled Ordnance, of Engineer to the War Department (when he was knighted), and finally of Superintendent of the Royal Gun-factory at Woolwich, with all the particulars of the government contract with the Elswick company. We do not dwell upon these points, the matter being more special than general, and The Story of the Guns requiring us rather to follow Mr. Whitworth's further experiments. Though no longer in intimate relation with the War Office, Mr. Whitworth continued to place at the disposal of the authorities the use of his patents for further discoveries, the expenses of which were defrayed from his private resources; and though not the successful competitor for the honour (and profit) of supplying the national gun, was employed by Lord Panmure, when Secretary of State for War (at the close of 1857), in rifling a cast-iron block for a 32-pounder, the intention being to determine the capacity of that metal for the manufacture of rifled ordnance. This gun burst under trial, as afterwards did another of the same metal and calibre; but notwithstanding these evidences of the insufficiency of cast-iron, Mr. Whitworth rifled a third gun, a 68-pounder, in June, 1858, mainly to test the power of a new projectile, an experiment which, so far as the projectile went, was a complete triumph, but the gun was rent into fragments by the explosion. The causes of this accident were explained by Mr. Whitworth in a letter deprecating the further use of cast metal for rifled cannon; but the explanation was not received, the Secretary for War (General Peel) directing Mr. Whitworth to be informed that he had (*logically!*) determined "to discontinue further experiments with ordnance *rifled on his principle!*"

Mr. Whitworth met this attack on his scientific reputation by resolving at once, from an amateur artillerist, to become a professional gunmaker, never having had, as he stated before the House of Commons Committee of 1863, the most distant idea of becoming a manufacturer of rifled arms. "I took it up," he said, "originally, solely because I was requested by the government, but when I received this letter from General Peel to inform me that no more experiments were to be made with guns

on my principle, I determined at once to become a manufacturer, and to prove that my system was right. With respect to the rifle, it has already been shown that it was so; and I think it will soon be admitted that I was right with regard to ordnance also." That question is the great one *yet to be determined*, but pending Mr. Whitworth's resolve, and the results which he anticipates, he founded his rifled ordnance manufactory at Manchester, and set to work upon the construction of the existing Whitworth gun, which, to be brief in our description, is formed of a tube of one piece of homogeneous iron, hooped by hydraulic pressure, a muzzle *or* breech-loader uniform of bore, rifled upon the principle already applied to small arms, and fitted with elongated iron projectiles. How this gun has answered was shown in the experiments made on the Southport Sands in the spring of 1860, when its extreme accuracy and wonderful range were tested,—the latter, it must be observed, implying the former, a principle laid down by the best artillerists. The range, then, on this occasion, is stated as follows:

"The smallest of the guns, a 3-pounder, weighing only 208 lbs., fired at an elevation of 35 deg., threw a shot to the distance of 9688 yards, or a little more than *five miles and a half*" —an excess of 500 yards over the greatest range ever reached by an Armstrong gun, though a 32-pounder, and fired with 6 lb. of powder at the same angle. Yet even the remarkable achievement of 1860 has been since exceeded by Mr. Whitworth, his 12-pounder gun having sent a ball 10,300 yards, a very little short of *six miles!* It was clear after this extraordinary result, that a renewed trial between the Whitworth and Armstrong guns could no longer be refused, and it was ordered to take place. Why it never came off, arose from the nature of the conditions, wholly unfavourable to Mr. Whitworth, which the Ordnance Select Committee sought to impose on him. Here the actual Story of the Guns may be said to end, the issue between the competitive weapons being as yet undetermined, but the remainder of Sir Emerson Tennent's book, which describes the rise and progress of the iron navy, and its capability of resisting the newly invented artillery, is full of valuable and interesting matter.

What aspect the comparative experiments which will shortly commence, are to wear, appears in the following passage: "They will be conducted, not by the usual Ordnance Committee, composed exclusively of military and naval officers, but by another specially named, with whom two scientific civilians have been associated, Mr. John Penn and Mr. Pole, the former distinguished in the highest walks of his profession as a mechanical engineer. The programme of tests to which the guns are to be subjected will doubtless include every point essential to determine all questions of construction, velocity, range, and precision; rapidity of firing, powers of destruction, and length of endurance. The issue of this important contest will be watched by the public with profound and unwonted interest—but the result, to whichever side victory may incline, must not be permitted again to close the gates against the honourable ambition of other aspirants. Sir William Armstrong and Mr. Whitworth are but *two* out of those clamouring for admission; others in due course of time will advance their pretensions, and whatever be the result of the approaching trial, whether it attest the superiority of the Armstrong gun, or point to its supercession by the Whitworth, no judgment, *as between them*, must preclude the just claims of other rivals to an equally dispassionate scrutiny." With respect to prolonged competition, Sir Emerson Tennent closes his admirable work with these remarks: "The disinterred utensils of extinct races, the implements discovered in the tumuli of Asia, and in the earth-mounds of the Mississippi; even the instruments found in the tombs of Etruria and Upper Egypt, as well as in the dwellings and workshops of Pompeii, exhibit combinations of mechanical parts as effective for their objects as those employed at the present time. There is no reason why similar excellence should not be attainable in ordnance; nor why science should not be so successfully applied to the construction of large guns as to render them, by a combination of *strength and simplicity*, so nearly perfect as practically to require no further improvement. But till that point shall have been attained, competition must remain open; and whatever be the temporary inconveniences of change, the abiding interests of the country will henceforth require that the man who reaches the high eminence of giving his name to the arms with whose protection the nation reposes should hold it by no other tenure than that of uncontested superiority."

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER III. NURSE PIGOTT.

THE Chiswick festival came to an end, and the company departed. Griffin Blunt lingered to the last, and wound his way to the door of egress, through a silken labyrinth of polite conversations and bowing adieux. Ivanhoff's last aria, and Malibran's last cadence; Prince Esterhazy's last conversazione, and the Duke of Devonshire's last ball at Brighton; the odds for the St. Leger, the beauties of drawn tulle bonnets; taste and the musical glasses—without Shakspeare—had each their graceful mention, as Blunt fluttered in and about the parterres of beauty and fashion. The scene at the gate was like the crush-room at the Opera, only with mellow sunlight turned on, instead of garish gas—like the "pin" at St. James's without the trains and plumes. The company had begun to yawn. Even Fashion is not exempt from the laws of fatigue; and perhaps one reason why great people grow tired of one another, is that they see one another so frequently—the endurable world being so extremely small.

Mr. Blunt had divers offers of conveyance to town. He might have continued a Squire of Dames to the last, and sat behind the most expensively jobbed horses in the metropolis. But he courteously declined all such proposals. He had a little business to transact, he said, and he was everybody's humble and devoted servant. He remained, however, chatting, bowing, smiling, until the crush grew thin, until the shamefaced people who had come down in glass-coaches and hackneys took heart of grace and bade the red jackets summon their hired vehicles, and until one or two attachés of foreign legations, and hardened Guardsmen, kindled their cigars before strolling away. In justice to them it must be admitted, that even these offenders peeped round to see there were no ladies near. Now-a-days, shame and the smoker have been hopelessly divorced. So far from hesitating as to lighting a cigar in a lady's presence, the worshipper of nicotine well-nigh presumes to ask Beauty for a Vesuvian. A qui la faute? Is Beauty or Bœotia to blame?

The trees of Chiswick were bathed in crimson and burnished gold, and cast shadows of deepest purple, before Blunt himself ventured to light his cigar. When he began to smoke, he smoked vigorously, and as he walked away with a firm hasty tread, the white wreaths of vapour circling behind him, his gait seemed very different from that of the mincing tripping exquisite of half an hour ago. Had you had Fortunatus's cap, or had you been in the receipt of fern seed, you might have availed yourself of the privilege of invisibility, trodden on his varnished heel—marked how nervously he turned and started, although he had but scrunched a pebble—and then, looking in his face, have discovered, not without amazement, that his face was as the face of an old man.

Terribly jaded, haggard, and careworn. A film seemed to have come over the eyes. No silver, but a rust rather, mingled with the jetty hair and whiskers. And the smile had fled away from the mouth, and left only furrows of cruelty and hardness there.

He struck into a by-lane, green and solitary as though it had been fifty miles from London, and walking rapidly, soon came upon a mean little wayside tavern, all thatch and ivy and honeysuckle, and with the sign of the Goat swinging before it. He passed through the bar, where two market gardeners sprawled over their pipes and beer on a bench—one, awake and uproarious; the other, asleep and snoring; both as happy, doubtless, as the Great Mogul. He turned to a little side-window, and in the most unaffected manner in the world ordered a glass of brandy. He, order brandy! Nevertheless, he not only did order brandy, but drank it without flinching; and, what is still more singular, paid for it—a performance to which he was, to say the least, unaccustomed. However, this was to be for Mr. Blunt an evening unusually marked by the disbursement of ready money.

"There is a person here with a child," he said, less asking a question than asserting something of which he entertained no doubt.

"In the parlour, sir," the landlady replied, with a low curtsey; for gentlemen so gallantly accoutred were by no means frequent customers at the Goat.

He looked inquiringly for the parlour's whereabout. The landlady bustled from behind her counter, and ushered him into a little room at the extremity of the passage, and then re-

turned to gossip with her daughter about the beautiful teeth and whiskers and gold chain of the distinguished stranger.

"And such a lovely little angel of a child as is a waitin' for him," the hostess pursued, "his da'ater, for sure."

"Is her mother with her?" asked Phœbe, the daughter.

"Her mother!" echoed the landlady in great disdain. "Do you think, child, such a grand gentleman would bring his wife here among the likes of us. No, no, it must be the nuss; for she's only got on a cotton print dress and an eight-and-twenty shilling shawl, and her bonnet 'd be dear at four-and-elevenpence, strings and all."

"What does he bring *her* here for, and what could such a grand gentleman want with four penn'orth of brandy?" persisted Phœbe, who was of an inquiring disposition.

"There, go along child, and wash up your glasses," cried the landlady in a pet: probably because she too was unable to answer these questions to her own satisfaction. "It ain't no business of ours. Maybe he likes brandy, though the nuss had a pint o' wine and a sweet biscuit, and paid for it like a lady. Go along, I say, and don't stand chattering there." Whereupon Mrs. Landlady, who was somewhat hot of temper, elbowed her daughter into a small cavern used as a lavatory for the drinking vessels of the establishment, and entered into communion with a piece of chalk and a slate: not, however, being able to dissociate perturbed cogitations as to her customers from the otherwise absorbing occupation of calculating what additions might be discreetly made to the score of the two market gardeners, while the one was snoring, and the other singing a song certainly without beginning, and seemingly without end.

Meanwhile the object of this conversation had entered the parlour and made his salutations to its occupants. These salutations were of a twofold nature.

"How do you do, Nurse Pigott?" he said, with an affable nod and a forced smile, to a fubsy dumpy woman with a very red round face, and for whose attire the brief but graphic summary given by the landlady to her daughter will amply suffice. "All well with you at home, I hope?"

"Nicely, sir, which it also left my husband, thankin' you kindly, and glory be," responded the dumpy woman, rising and dropping a profound reverence. "But oh, sir, Miss Lily have been a takin' on dreadful."

"What's the matter with her—the little puss?" exclaimed Blunt, sharply. And this was his second salutation.

The "little puss" was sitting on the dumpy woman's knee. Indeed, she was a very little puss—a tiny fair girl of three years old. She had very long brown hair curling in thick profusion round her chubby face. She had very large wondering blue eyes; but these, on the present occasion, were red and swollen. Her whole face was suffused with the moisture of sorrow. Her little lips were twitching. It was evident that the "little puss" had been crying her eyes out.

"Be quiet, miss, and don't be naughty, or I shall tell Nurse Pigott to give you a whipping," said Blunt.

His words were harsh and unfeeling; but oddly enough his manner was not so. He spoke less in anger than in the languid tone of an Indian Begum telling her slave-girl that really, if she gave her any more trouble, she would be compelled to have her buried alive. It may be that he had enjoyed very very little experience of children, and erroneously imagined that whipping was the only specific course of treatment available in the case of tears. At any rate, the threat had not the desired effect, the child being evidently aware that Nurse Pigott was no more likely to execute it than to cut her head off with a carving-knife. So she began to cry louder than ever.

"Tut, tut, tut!" Mr. Blunt murmured, pacing the room in vexation. "Dear me, dear me, Nurse Pigott, this is very embarrassing, and not at all fair to me, you know. When I paid your last month's bill, and told you I was obliged to take Miss Lily away, I distinctly informed you there was to be no crying. My nerves can't stand it, they can't, indeed." But there was little good in reasoning with Nurse Pigott.

"Oh! sir," she sobbed out, half essaying to comfort Lily, and half to dry her own eyes with the corner of her shawl, "I can't help it, I can't indeed, sir, when I thinks of that there blessed innocent which I took from the breast, and have never left, night nor day, for three years Janiwerry, likewise nursing her through measles and hoopin'-cough, and all her pretty ways, a pulling of us all to pieces, and hangin' round us, and my 'usband is a-fond of her as if she was his own, which we have buried two and the twins being the one of them that's left is but sickly, and will never make old bones, which the doctor told me only last Tuesday was a fortnight, it breaks my heart, it do, indeed, to part with the little darling. Oh, sir, let the child bide with us, and don't take her away."

Griffin Blunt was too well bred to bite his nails—besides, he had not taken off his gloves; but he bit his lips, and contracted his brows, and paced the room more nervously than ever. "You're a stupid old woman," he muttered, pettishly.

"I know I am," acquiesced Nurse Pigott, with a fresh succession of sobs, "and so's my 'usband, that is in bein' fond of the little cherub, and glad would he be for us to keep it, though only a journeyman plasterer, and times is hard as hard can be."

"She is trying it on for more money, the old hypocrite!" Mr. Blunt said, internally. "I told you," he continued aloud, turning to Nurse Pigott, "that it was absolutely necessary for me to remove the little girl. I am about to take

her to a place where she will be well educated.

"She ain't old enough to be educated," moaned Nurse Pigott. "Besides, my 'usband reads beautiful, and there's a lovely school round the corner at twopence a week, and let alone teaching, there's nobody but me knows how much bread-and-butter she wants."

"Pray let me have no more of this painful discussion," the dandy, with calm dignity, interposed. "When I made an appointment with you to meet me here, you understood the purpose for which you were to bring the child. You have been paid for her maintenance, and I must tell you, that if you have any views of gaining more money by her, they will be disappointed.

"Money!" exclaimed Nurse Pigott, half choking, and by this time as much with indignation as with grief. "Money! I scorns it. It isn't money I want, nor my 'usband neither. If the dear child had been put out to us by the parish, we'd ha' done our dooty by it. If its fathers and mothers were lords and ladies and hemperors, we'd ha' done the same. It isn't for the money, though little enough, goodness knows, and not paid regular, which you know, sir, not being disrespectable to you. And if you'd leave the darling with us, and money was a little short, I'm sure we'd wait for better times, and never trouble you for one brass farthing, if you'd only let us 'ave our little little Lily." Nurse Pigott subsided after this into mere incoherence of grief.

Mr. Blunt winced when reminded that he had not been too punctual a paymaster. He could see, however, that the remark was totally devoid of malice. He could not help acknowledging that the child, whom he had seen, perhaps, six times during three years, had been reared with infinite love and tenderness by Nurse Pigott, all vulgar and dumpy as she was. And something like a feeling of shame made his mind blush at the remembrance that this love and tenderness had been bestowed upon Lily by strangers.

"There, there, Nurse Pigott," he said, as soothingly as he could, "I'm sure you've done your best with the little thing, and her papa and her mamma (who is too ill, poor thing, to come and see her) are very much obliged to you. Only, you know, the best of friends must part. I told you that, ever so long ago. Come, don't let us have any more fuss—you can't tell how it injures my nerves—and kiss the child and all that sort of thing, for I'm rather pressed for time."

Nurse Pigott had her nerves too, and for days she had been attempting to nerve herself to undergo with fortitude a separation, which Blunt, to do him justice, had warned her was inevitable. For you see that to part with a domestic pet round which the cords of your heart have twined themselves, is very very hard. And Nurse Pigott had known Lily long before she could speak or walk. She had sat by her night after night in those sicknesses when the life of a little child is as easily blown out as a rushlight. She had rejoiced in her growing strength and beauty. For what light and knowledge there was already in Lily's mind, Nurse Pigott, with rough homely kindly hands, had opened the door. She had taught the little morsel of Christianity to prattle some prayers, to lisp some key-notes of reverence and fear, and to look up at the sky, and talk of what became of good and naughty people. Lily used to call her "mumma," and the male Pigott (plasterer by trade, honest and kind-hearted fellow by nature) she accosted as "dada." Yes; the divorce was hard, albeit the youngling was none of their own. They had no girls; but Lily had possessed as a foster-brother the surviving twin, a tranquil little boy, with wisdom far beyond his years, who passed the major part of his time in sprawling on the ground (probably out of doors), in earnest contemplation of the curious features of that external world which the doctor forbade his parents to entertain a hope of his long living to investigate. Lily's nurture under the auspices of Nurse Pigott had been the reverse of refined, but it had never lacked affectionate and sedulous care. The good woman absolutely doted on her charge, although five shillings a week was all the remuneration she received for tending her. Work was sometimes slack with the plasterer, and he, his wife and the twin (whose profoundly philosophical temperament led him to regard potato-peelings as an aliment equal in succulence to bread-and-butter, or even to meat), had occasionally to go on short commons; but Lily was never bereft of a meal abundant in quantity and nourishing in quality. She had never known what it was to go without pudding. A slight meat eater she was, as beseemed her age; yet what morsels of flesh she required were never wanting, even if they had to be purchased from the proceeds accruing from the deposit in tribulation of the plasterer's great silver watch. The male Pigott's affection for her was prodigious. In her earliest youth he could with difficulty be deterred from offering her sups of beer from his evening pint; and when told that the fermented infusion of malt and hops was improper refreshment for a child, he, of his own motion, absolutely forewent a nightly moiety of his beer money in order to purchase apples and gingerbread for his foster-baby. The price of half a pint of porter was not a very sumptuous bounty; but a penny goes a very long way in a poor man's household.

Lily's stock of clothes had never been very extensive nor very abundant; but Nurse Pigott had kept the little wardrobe with admirable and scrupulous neatness. Only once during the three years and a half had she ever importuned Mr. Blunt (with whom she was instructed to correspond through the medium of a London post-office, and the initials F. B.), for money. That was after a journey to Kensington undertaken by the nurse, when in the window of a certain haberdasher's in the High-street, she had seen a robe of mouse-coloured merino, so curiously embroidered with

silken braid that she had there and then determined to secure it for Lily either by the legitimate means of asking Mr. Blunt for the money, or by selling or pawning her own goods and chattels, or by bursting bodily into the shop and making off with the much-coveted robe. Fortunately, however, measures so desperate had not to be resorted to. Mr. Blunt happened to be in funds and in a good humour, when he received a pathetic and ill-spelt letter directed to F. B.; and the sum demanded, which was but two guineas, was forwarded. But chiefly had Mrs. Pigott found favour in the fine gentleman's eyes from the exquisite cleanliness and neatness in which she had always kept Lily. The philosophical twin objected on principle to soap, and his father deprecated his being subjected to much lavatory discipline, on the ground that he (the twin) would be washed away if he were washed often; but there was always warm water for Lily and Windsor soap for Lily; nay, on one occasion good Nurse Pigott had purchased a bar of Castile soap, the which, from its curiously marbled appearance, the child imagined to be sweetstuff, and essayed to suck. Winter and summer she never went without her bath, and although her poor little garments had frequently to be pieced and darned, she was always shining as the newest of pins.

A very few words will suffice to explain how Lily came into Nurse Pigott's custody. Three years and a half before the commencement of this history, the plasterer became cognisant of an advertisement in the day before yesterday's Morning Advertiser (it was before the days of penny journalism), which he was in the habit of borrowing from the hostelry where he purchased his modest allowance of beer. This advertisement set forth that a lady and gentleman were desirous of placing an infant at nurse with some respectable person in the immediate vicinity of London. The Pigotts then occupied a diminutive cottage at Brentford. Forthwith they answered the advertisement, in an epistle which the plasterer considered to be a chef-d'œuvre of caligraphy and composition, and which was, indeed, a marvel of archaic orthography and abnormal pothooks and hangers. In due time an answer arrived, and an appointment was made to meet the advertiser in London. Thither went Nurse Pigott, arrayed in her Sunday best; and, at a specified hotel in Dover-street, Piccadilly, she was received—not by Mr. Blunt, but by Monsieur Sournois, from Switzerland, his valet, who made all the necessary arrangements for the reception of an infant six months old, and paid a month in advance of the sum stipulated for. Being asked whether the child was christened (for Nurse Pigott was a staunch Church of England woman), he replied that it did not matter. Being pressed on this point, he said it was all right, and that the child's name was Lily Smith. And as Lily Smith she was received by Nurse Pigott. The good woman did not feel herself called upon to ask any more questions. Infants are put out to nurse every year, and by the thousand, in and about London, without references more searching than a money-payment in advance. Very often no name at all is asked for or furnished. I wonder whether such a system encourages immorality. I should like to hear, on this subject, those blessed Sisters of La Sainte Enfance, "the Holy Childhood" at Hong-Kong, who buy babies from the Chinese mothers to save the little innocents from being cast into the sea, or thrown (as they are in the interior of China) to the pigs.

The little Lily Smith throve apace, and had not more than an average share of infantile ailments. Monsieur Sournois came at first once a month to see Baby, and greatly impressed Nurse Pigott with the amenity of his manners and the affability of his conversation. By-and-by he was succeeded by Mr. Blunt, who never kissed the child, or fondled it, or took much more notice of it, in a languid survey through the medium of his eye-glass, than if Lily had been a waxen doll in a toy-shop. Thus did the little girl remain until she was nearly four years of age; and it was a day of bitter sorrow for Nurse Pigott and the plasterer, when a curt letter arrived from Mr. Blunt—or F. B., as he continued to sign himself—directing the child to be made ready and brought to the present place of rendezvous. So Lily, poor little shorn lamb, after having the wind tempered to her, was suddenly to be given up to the grim gaunt wolf.

I retract—gaunt if you please, but not grim; for while I have been telling the story of Lily's babyhood, Mr. Blunt's countenance has been robed in his most dulcet smile, and he has been exhausting his seductive arsenal to soothe and conciliate the sobbing child. He has done everything but kiss her. One loses the taste for innocent kisses as one loses the taste for bread-and-jam.

The nurse was consoled and the child quieted at last; and after an infinity of hugging, the plasterer's wife announced that she was ready to go, and that she was sorry for having kept the gentleman so long. Between the spasms of her parting embrace she told Lily that she should see her again very soon.

"And I may, mayn't I, sir?" she continued, turning with an appealing look to the dandy. "Oh say that I may, if it's only once a year. I shall break my 'art, I know I shall, if I don't see my darling again."

"Of course, of course!" replied Blunt, who would have promised anything to secure a good deliverance. "The child shall write to you"—poor little Lily, who didn't know great A from a bull's foot: "that is, I'll write, yes, yes. Now, my good Nurse Pigott, we really must be going, you know."

So two heavy hearts and one very callous heart went out of the little tavern parlour and into the road: the landlady and her inquisitive daughter craning their necks after all the hearts. There

was no luggage to carry. Lily's effects would not have filled an ordinary carpet-bag; but Blunt had graciously informed Mrs. Pigott that she might keep the child's clothes, as new clothes would be provided for her at the place whither she was bound. Where that place might be, the good woman did not venture to ask.

At the end of the lane—not that by which Mr. Blunt had approached, but its opposite extremity—a hackney-coach was waiting. It was now nearly dark. By F. B.'s direction Nurse Pigott lifted Lily into the vehicle, which had already, as she could obscurely discern, one occupant, and that a man. The child was by this time wholly tired, and half asleep. The dandy condescendingly gave Nurse Pigott a couple of fingers, dexterously hustled her on one side, and in another minute she found herself crying in the middle of the road, quite alone.

But not so lonely as poor little Lily, albeit she was in a carriage with two men, one of whom told her that he was her papa.

CHAPTER IV. THE MISS BUNNYCASTLES' ESTABLISHMENT.

Early to bed and early to rise was the time-honoured maxim in the establishment of the Miss Bunnycastles, Rhododendron House, Rhododendron private road, Stockwell. Time-honoured indeed, and with justice it might be called, for it had been acted upon for at least twenty years, during which lengthened period the Bunnycastle family had kept a ladies' school in Rhododendron-road, as aforesaid. Stay; I have fallen into a slight error. When Mrs. Bunnycastle first undertook, in the second decade of the nineteenth century, those scholastic duties at Stockwell which her daughters subsequently and efficiently performed, Rhododendron private road existed only in the form of a narrow path between two market gardens, and went, I fear, by the painfully unacademic name of Cut-throat-lane. But when culture came to Clapham, and civilisation to Stockwell, the by-path became a "private road," neatly gravelled, and bordered by trim villas. The old market gardener's habitation indeed remained, but was rechristened Rhododendron House. Formerly it had been known as Bubb's Folly. Bubb was the last market gardener, and inherited the house: a rambling one-storied structure of red brick: from his grandfather. Long and careful attention to horticulture brought him riches, and in his old age it was bruited about that he had become somewhat mad, though not so mad as to require any restraint, or be in any way incapable of managing his own affairs; for he was to the day of his death as avaricious an old screw, and as keen a hand at a bargain, as could be found between Bermondsey and Brixton. His madness did not go further than that harmless eccentricity to which physiologists may have observed that enriched tailors, hatters, and market gardeners, are frequently subject. In pursuance of this craze, Bubb turned all his nephews and nieces out of doors, contracted a morganatic alliance with a bold-faced housekeeper with an abusive tongue and an uncontrollable taste for silk dresses and ardent spirits, and—he who had sat for so many years under the Reverend Mr. Bradbody of Stockwell, and had even been a deacon to that shining congregational light—plunged headlong into secularism, attended infidel lectures, and ceased to believe in anything. He took to drinking also. In a word, Mr. Bubb was, in his latter days that by no means uncommon character, a "wicked old man;" a quarrelsome old curmudgeon, who swore hard, drank hard, and didn't wash. As a climax to his strange proceedings, he added a tower, or belvedere, to his grandfather's old brick house. At the summit of this edifice, which resembled externally a Chinese pagoda brick faced, and with a dash of the truncated factory chimney about it, he built a smoking-room, where he swore and drank and took tobacco, till his time came, and he died. The pagoda-chimney belvedere had caused the house to be called Bubb's Folly; and long after Bubb's decease, ancient people persisted in applying the old title to Rhododendron House.

If the belvedere, however, were Bubb's Folly, the surrounding ground, which he directed in his will to be carefully let out in building lots, might, with equal propriety, have been designated Bubb's Common Sense. The morganatic housekeeper, to the rage and despair of the nephews and nieces, came into all the property, and even the High Court of Chancery could not pick a hole in the crazy old market gardener's last will and testament. The enriched housekeeper removed to grander quarters at Clapham, and the old brick Folly passed through many vicissitudes, while houses in the most modern style of domestic architecture sprang up on either side. Bubb, however, had willed that his Folly was not to be demolished, and, being advertised, at last, as "eligible school premises," with "an observatory admirably suited for scientific purposes," it was taken about the year eighteen hundred and sixteen by Mrs. Bunnycastle, and turned into an establishment for young ladies.

Mrs. Bunnycastle's husband was a gentleman who had taught writing, arithmetic, and the use of the globes, in surburban seminaries, for many years. He also gave instruction in the Belles Lettres: that is to say, he would recite, with the sonorous emphasis of the late John Kemble, any number of pages from the "Elegant Extracts" and "Enfield's Speaker." To this declamation young ladies of a literary turn (it was a blue-stocking age) listened with intense admiration. Mrs. Bunnycastle (née Lappin) had been in her youth a nursery-governess in a great family, and was of a soft sentimental disposition. She was a great educational theorist, and had so filled her head with dogmas of tuition out of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Madame Leprince de Beaumont, and Mesdames Chapone, Trimmer, and Hannah More—to say nothing of Dr. Edgworth, and the

Reverends Messrs. Gisborne and Chirol, and Dr. Fordyce's "Discourse on the Character and Conduct of the Female Sex"—that her educational system ended in her permitting her pupils to do pretty well as they liked. She was much beloved by them, in consequence. Her favourite work, after "Emile," was "Adelaide and Theodore, or Letters upon Education:" that dreary simpering old farrago of well-meaning inanities, in which the baroness writes to Madame d'Ostalis to tell her how Seraphine has bitten her little brother, but how she has succeeded in "producing perfection" in her daughter Adelaide, who is "fourteen years old, an excellent musician, drawing with amazing proficiency, speaking and singing Italian like a native, and absolutely cured of all little female deficiencies." Happy Adelaide, and thrice happy baroness!

The worthy Bunnycastle died a year before Rhododendron House was taken. His widow was faithful to his memory, and brought up her three daughters, Adelaide (so christened after the baroness's paragon), Celia, and Barbara, in love and reverence of their inoffensive papa's portrait, with its shirt frill, and its hair powder (the latter beautifully painted), and with the silver standish "presented to him by the young ladies of Ostrolenko Lodge, Camberwell, in slight testimony of his unwearied exertions in teaching them plain and ornamental writing, arithmetic (on Mr. Walkingame's principle), the use of the globes, and other polite accomplishments, for many years." In this history's year 1836 the three Miss Bunnycastles were all old maids. There is no use in disguising the matter; it was palpable. With Adelaide and with Celia the case was hopeless. They were both past thirty, and had made up their minds to celibacy. About Barbara, only, who was barely twenty-five, could any faint and feeble matrimonial hopes be entertained. When such hopes were hinted in her presence by the charitable-minded among her own sex—the married ladies, bien entendu—Barbara shrugged her pretty shoulders—she *was* pretty—and sometimes smiled, and sometimes sighed. Meanwhile she went on watching the pianoforte practice, and the small-tooth combing (after sundry soap and towel preliminaries) of the little ones on Saturday nights. That was her department in the economy of Rhododendron House. She did not murmur. She was perfectly resigned. Only, if any eligible young man had suddenly appeared before her, say from the Planet Mars, or from the bowels of the earth, and had said, "It is true that I am a returned convict, a professed forger and coiner, and a monster in human form—that I have a blighted heart and a seared conscience—that I murdered my great-aunt, and sold my country, and picked a gentleman's pocket of a yellow bandanna at Camberwell Fair; but still my intentions are strictly honourable. I have a marriage license in my right-hand trousers-pocket, and a ring and a pair of white kid gloves in my left. There is a glass-coach at the door, the pew-opener will officiate as bridesmaid, and the beadle will be my best man. Come, my beloved, and I will lead thee to the hymeneal altar," I am inclined to think that Barbara Bunnycastle would incontinently have cast her arms about that eligible young man's neck, and cried out "Take me, interesting stranger!"

In 1836, Mrs. Bunnycastle was a very old smiling lady, with glossy-white ringlets. Her countenance was wrinkled, but it was rosy still. She was still soft and sentimental, and much addicted to the perusal of novels: standing, as regards these characteristics in strong contradistinction to her eldest daughter, Adelaide, who was an exceedingly practical spinster, and the inflexible disciplinarian of the establishment.

I have said that "early to bed, and early to rise," was the golden rule abided by at Rhododendron House. The younger pupils retired to rest at half-past seven. Those of medium age, that is, under twelve, went to roost at eight. By nine, the elder girls reached their dormitories. At ten, the governesses and parlour-boarders bade Mrs. Bunnycastle good night. At half-past ten, the three daughters of that estimable and venerable person kissed, each, her parent on the forehead; and by eleven o'clock every light in Rhododendron House was extinguished. All the girls and their teachers were up by six o'clock in the morning; the three sisters only indulged in half-an-hour's extra somnolence; and, punctually at eight o'clock, Mrs. Bunnycastle, in her unvarying cap with yellow satin bows, and her white ringlets arranged in faultless symmetry, made her appearance at the common breakfast-table.

All their meals, with one exception, pupils and preceptresses took together. Breakfast, dinner, and tea, were served in the great bow-windowed dining-room giving on to the lawn; but supper was a special and exclusive meal which none of the children partook of at all, which the parlour-boarders and teachers consumed in a kind of still-room adjoining the pantry, but which Mrs. Bunnycastle and her daughters enjoyed in their own little parlour. The meal was served (tea having been got through at five) at nine P.M. The mother and daughters loved to linger over their meal, and, although they ate and drank but little, it was often prolonged to close upon the time for retiring to rest. It was the only season throughout the weary monotonous day when they were alone, and at their ease. They were free from the constraint of keeping on their countenance that expression of simulated gravity, not to say severity, which all those whose vocation it is to educate youth, whether male or female, think it their bounden duty to assume while occupying the rostrum of pedagogic authority. This is why schoolmasters and schoolmistresses get prematurely worn, wrinkled, and shrunken.

Supper-time, then, was an hour of unmingled delectation for the Bunnycastle family. Then, they were free from the heated and half-stifling atmosphere of the schoolrooms; for ventilation, as an adjunct to education, had not been thought

of in 1836. Then, they were quit of the brawling exasperating swarm of youngsters, the scarcely less tiresome elder girls, and the exacting parlour-boarders, who, because their parents paid fifty guineas per annum for their maintenance at Rhododendron House, deemed it a prime article in their creed to hold, in secret, if not openly, Mrs. and the Miss Bunnycastles as the dust beneath their feet. At supper-time, the schoolmistress and her daughters were relieved from the presence of these superb ones of the earth in short skirts and frilled trousers. At supper-time, they were rid, too, of the teachers: amiable and worthy young persons all of them, no doubt, but wearisome on daily and unremitting acquaintance. At supper-time, they could chat without let or hindrance. They could run over the occurrences of the day. They could dwell, now with satisfaction, now with discontent, upon how much their young charges paid, and how much they ate. They could concoct letters of thanks to complimentary parents, or of deprecation to remonstrant ones. They could revolve plans of scholastic aggrandisement, discuss points of discipline, compare methods of instruction, grumble at their lot in that luxuriousness of complaint which is well-nigh akin to content, and gossip about their neighbours. Thus, supper in the little back parlour at Rhododendron House, combined the gravity of a cabinet council with the hilarity of a symposium.

INDIAN RAILWAYS.

Supposing that for the future we have no more mutinies and rebellions in India, the progress of railway enterprise promises to provide a complete system of railway communication in that country. The days of palankeen travelling have come to an end. The days of the dâk are numbered. The iron horse on nearly all main roads now supplies the place of the cooley, the bullock, and the wretched posting pony. Not only are the principal lines being carried through to distant destinations, but cross-lines, lightly constructed on the American plan, are being rapidly run up, or, more correctly speaking, run down, to connect them one with another, and act as feeders to the great sources of traffic. At the present time, the principal communications are in the hands of three great companies —the East Indian, the Great Indian Peninsular, and the Madras. The course of the first—which starts from Calcutta, and runs, with very little interruption, to Delhi, whence it is making a bold push for the Punjab, to join a line of which part is in operation in that province—has been already sketched in a former article.* In a short time, however, the majority of travellers from England will find it more convenient to proceed to the north-west and central provinces viâ Bombay, whence the Great Indian Peninsular is already open for a considerable distance towards Jubbulpore, where it is to join a branch of the East Indian from Allahabad.

Another line of the Great Indian Peninsular is one in a south-eastern direction, from Bombay to Madras. This is open as far as Sholapore. Here it will break into two branches, one going to Hyderabad (Hyderabad in the Dekhan, and not to be confounded with Hyderabad in Scinde), and the other to Bellary, where it will meet the line from Madras. The line to Hyderabad is to be continued in a direction due south, joining the main line at Cuddapore. But this is not all that railway enterprise is doing for Bombay. The Great Indian Peninsular has also a line in a direction due north, between Bombay, Baroda, and Ahmedabad. This is already open for the greater part of the distance, a slight gap which remains being at the Bombay end, where some unusual engineering difficulties prevail. From the Jubbulpore line, also, there is a branch to Nagpore, the seat of government of the Central Provinces, and this is already partly completed.

Some of the works on the Great Indian Peninsular line are of considerable importance and magnitude. Among these, the most remarkable is the passage through the celebrated Bhore Ghaut, between Bombay and Poonah, on the line to Jubbulpore. In a distance of fifteen miles, the railway climbs an ascent of one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one feet, the difficulties in its course being overcome by such a series of cuttings, tunnels, viaducts, and embankments, as are not to be found within the same space, we are assured by the official report, in any other quarter of the world. The earthwork alone necessary to effect these objects, amounts to four and a half millions of cubic miles. Several of the embankments exceed sixty feet in height, and there is a cutting of one hundred and fifty feet through solid rock. One of the viaducts is one hundred and forty-three feet from the surface. Some idea of the general nature of the works may be formed from the fact, that their construction occupied seven years and a quarter, about four years being spent in preliminary operations. The Bhore Ghaut, it appears, was first made practicable for the passage of artillery by the Duke of Wellington, when in command of the forces in the Dekhan, who, with instinctive foresight, saw the importance of improved communication with Bombay; and about thirty three-years ago Sir John Malcolm opened the Ghaut for cart traffic. But it may be doubted if either of those two great men ever dreamed of the toilsome and difficult path through which it was just possible to drag great guns, or transport stores in rude native vehicles drawn by oxen, being superseded by a royal road in the shape of a railway.

A line called the Great Southern of India Railway, is also open from the sea-coast south of Madras, at Cauvery, to Trinchinopoly (famous for cheroots), which will be joined by another line, extending from a point almost at the extreme south of the Peninsular, to Salem, on the Madras and Beypore line. These all belong to the Madras Railway Company. The Madras

* See page 564 of the last volume.

and Beypore line (Beypore being on the western coast) has suggested a short route for the mails, which has many arguments in its favour.

The magnitude as well as the difficulty of the operations of which the above is a more or less complete statement, may be estimated from the fact that up to the period of the last official report, embracing only a part of last year, no less than 2,597,941 tons of material necessary for construction, amounting in value to 13,843,392*l.*, have been sent out from this country to India, in 3292 ships, for the purposes of the railways. That these enterprises are considered a good speculation may be gathered from the fact that, on the 31st of December, 1862, the number of proprietors and debenture holders in the different lines was 31,420, having increased by 5260 in the course of the year. The numbers, in fact, increase in about the same ratio as the capital. In reference to this part of the subject, it should be explained to the reader who happens to know nothing about it, that five per cent is guaranteed to the companies by the government, to assist and give security to their operations. The financial position as detailed in the report of 1863 was this: In the course of the preceding financial year there had been an expenditure of 5,810,852*l.*; that in England having been 1,854,211*l.*, and that in India 3,956,563*l.* The amount raised by the companies, in addition to the sum of 2,515,496*l.*, which stood to their credit on the 1st of May, 1862, was 5,238,567*l.*, so that on the 1st of May there was a balance of 1,943,211*l.*, available for the current year's expenditure. This expenditure—for 1863-64—was estimated at 20,112*l.* in England, and 4,189,000*l.* in India; and it was anticipated that 5,293,000*l.* would be raised to meet it, in addition to the balance of 1,943,211*l.*

Among the novel appearances on the Indian lines which cannot fail to strike the passenger, may be noted the decidedly permanent setting of the electric telegraph, which faithfully follows their course, as in England. Originally, the wires were supported by the trunks of palm-trees, which gave a decidedly picturesque appearance to the Bidglee Dâk (lightning mail), as it is christened by the natives, especially when the said trunks would insist upon looking unscientific, by sending forth their feathery foliage at the summit. But the wind and the rain played sad havoc with these supports, and the natives assisted nature by mounting them at inconvenient seasons to deposit articles of more or less bulk, which they desired to have transmitted by this expeditious conveyance! It has been found desirable, therefore, to replace them by solid columns of masonry, which are now to be seen in most places, and as masonry is not liable to be blown about, the wires are kept properly extended, and above suspicion of being tampered with. One of the chief dangers in the transit of the trains is the intrusion of cattle upon the rails; and in order to provide for it, the ingenious device of a "cow-catcher" has been much resorted to. This is a triangular machine attached to the engine in front, which being called a "cow-catcher," is not intended to catch cows, but simply to clear those animals out of the way. It is a decided "caution" to the intruder, who finds himself on a sudden tripped up and insinuated on one side, with liberty to resume his equilibrium and journey when the monster whose path he has ventured to cross has gone rushing and roaring on its way. The arrangement must be slightly bewildering to the cow, but it is certainly conducive to the public safety.

The general working of the lines may be thus detailed: The net receipts from all the open lines for the year ending 30th of June, 1862, were about 434,000*l.*, against 311,367*l.* of the previous year.

The number of passengers conveyed in the same period were 6,484,338 and 4,912,955 respectively.

The traffic, it is believed, has, upon the whole, been conducted with regularity and safety. Accidents have of course happened, but the official report is not aware that any have proved fatal to passengers. The native temperament is favourable to regularity and punctuality, and the casualties have been confined to the cows already alluded to, and a few natives who have been equally incautious. Fire has in many instances destroyed goods while in transit. This is in consequence of the use of wood instead of coal in many places—coal being a scarce article in India. But a hint taken from America, where the same inconvenience is felt, resulting in the use of wire-guards and similar precautions, has mitigated the evil. Wood of course will get into a blaze and send up a great deal of burning matter while in motion, which may set fire to a whole train unless proper protection be adopted.

The present changeable condition of the lines, we are told, makes it very difficult to draw any satisfactory conclusions as to their real value. While some are partially finished and extending in length every few months, while others are finished, but are without access to the stations, and while it is uncertain what will be the cost of the permanent establishments, and what the expenses of maintenance, it is impossible to estimate, with any degree of accuracy, their remunerative powers. And in connexion with the question of maintenance of way, it may be mentioned that while coal is scarce for one purpose, wood is also scarce for another. On several lines the wood used for sleepers has rapidly decayed, and it has been found expedient to use iron for the purpose. That this material lasts longer for the sleepers themselves is beyond a doubt; but the absence of elasticity has an injurious effect upon the locomotives and rolling stock, which wear out in their stead. The official report, however, does not admit the force of this objection. The consulting engineers of the companies count upon a great saving in the cost of maintenance from the use of iron sleepers, which are now sent out from England in large quantities, being adopted by the principal companies. The necessity for substituting iron, it

is stated, may to some extent be attributed to the high price of wood in India, as well as to its tendency to decay.

The amount paid to the several companies for guaranteed interest up to the 31st December, 1862, was 8,269,190*l.* This sum is subject to a deduction of about 1,600,000*l.*, which the government had received from the earnings of the railways, leaving a debt of about 6,650,000*l.* against the companies. The annual amount which will be due from the government for guaranteed interest, when the lines are finished, may be taken at 3,000,000*l.*; but the profits per mile per week of the lines are now rapidly increasing. A considerable portion of the above sum will consequently be met by payments into the government treasuries in India. The liability of the State will thus diminish gradually until it ceases altogether, and the railways are financially able to run alone. The amount of gross mileage receipts which should be earned by the companies to relieve the government from the payment of guaranteed interest, varies, of course, with the cost of construction, and of maintaining and working each mile; but taking the aggregate amount of capital to be expended upon 4600 miles to be 60,000,000*l.*, the gross receipts necessary to earn the guaranteed interest, supposing that fifty per cent is sufficient for maintenance and working, would be 6,000,000*l.* a year, or about 1300*l.* a mile a year, or 25*l.* a mile a week. In connexion with this fact, it is satisfactory to know that the gross receipts of the East Indian Railway, when the line is completed, should be about 36*l.*, and of the Great Indian Peninsular about 25*l.* per mile per week; and that they are both earning upwards of 22*l.*, and are increasing their receipts every month.

That the railways will before long prove remunerative themselves without government aid, there is no reason to doubt; and it will be a great day for the companies, as well as for the government, when they shall be released from the supervision which authority naturally insists upon, when it undertakes responsibility. At present, the Indian government has a regular "Railway Department," and its offices in the presidencies and the provinces must necessarily conflict, at times unpleasantly, with those of the companies. The check is not only justifiable, but necessary. It does not, however, conduce to perfect harmony, and the sooner the companies have earned independent control, the better for themselves, and everybody else. The commercial, social, and political advantages gained to the country by the establishment of the iron roads, are becoming more and more apparent. It is something, as the last report says, to have already raised the condition of the labourer by increasing his wages 60 or even 80 per cent; and it is something to have enabled upwards of 6,000,000 of people to have travelled by railway in twelve months, who, ten years ago, had not seen a locomotive engine. It is something, also, to have earned nearly 2,000,000*l.* since the lines were opened. In a few months, the great cotton-fields of Central India and of Guzerat will be in direct communication with Bombay; and Delhi, at the present time, is probably within two days' reach of Calcutta. In many districts between, where there has been hitherto no communication at all, a sure and rapid means of transit is fast being established; and in many places before unknown to the merchant will shortly be established markets where no interchange of commodities has yet taken place.

Much dread has always been felt by our countrymen at home of the climate in India; and the loss of life in high places of late years has induced something like a panic among men who would otherwise desire to cast their fortunes in the East. The fear felt in this country is generally delusive; the mortality which has taken place being mainly caused by exceptional circumstances. The wear and tear of the mutinies killed many men who might have battled with the climate for years. Lord Dalhousie, who, by the way, had not to face the political crisis, died through ailments quite independent of the influences to which he was subjected during his viceroyalty. Lord Canning, who bore the brunt, wore himself out with work and anxiety, which would have killed a man of his nervous temperament in any climate in the world. Lord Elgin, whose loss has so lately been lamented, died of heart disease, brought to a fatal conclusion by climbing a mountain, which would have been an equal enemy had it been an Alp. There is scarcely any man having the command of five hundred a year in India, and who is not driven by duty into particular exposure, who cannot take as good care of his life as a governor-general. Civil and military officers die continually in the country, whose deaths are not laid to the climate, and deaths in high places should not tell against it more than deaths in low places. An assistant magistrate or a lieutenant dies, and nobody thinks the worse of the climate; but, let a great man become, what in military returns is called a "casualty," and people on all sides discover that India must be essentially unfitted for Europeans. Indian invalids will find in the railway system a safeguard such as they never before enjoyed. The majority of maladies in the East require, before everything, to be taken in time. Change of air is the great restorative in most cases; but a race for life to the hills or the sea was more than most invalids could endure in the days of the road. Many a man and woman have been killed by the wear and tear of the dâk journey, who might have lived a long life, had they been able to get quietly to the journey's end. By the railway they may travel from one climate to another in a few hours, without trouble, with very little fatigue, and with the satisfaction of knowing that the chances are greatly against the engine proving a screw, refusing to move, jibbing, bolting, buck-jumping, or overturning the carriage.

The effect of Indian railways upon commerce and material prosperity need scarcely be pointed out. Already they have given a wonderful im-

petus to the trade of the country in every direction; and in the article of cotton alone have been the means of working great good, by mitigating the disastrous effects of the Lancashire famine in that staple. Politically, they are of an importance which cannot be exaggerated. Its extent will be sufficiently indicated by a single paragraph from the speech of Sir Bartle Frere, the governor of Bombay, at the opening of the Bhore Ghaut incline. After alluding to certain advantages, so obvious as scarcely to require pointing out, his excellency added, "Some of us have served with the men of our old European regiments who marched with but one halt from Panwell to Poonah, to fight the battle of Kirkee; and all of us can estimate the military and political advantages of a work which will connect all the capitals of India, and place the garrisons of Madras and Bombay as close to each other in point of time as those of Poonah and Bombay were within living memory. It is no exaggeration to say that the completion of our great lines of railway will quadruple the available military strength of India."

How near we are to that object may be estimated from the latest official statement of progress. From this it appears that out of 4679 miles of railway the length open and in operation on the 1st of January, 1863, was 2527. In 1863 it was expected that 624 would be completed, as has probably been the case. During 1864, 620 are due, which will leave a balance of 906 to be completed in 1865, and (say) the middle of the following year. These items comprise the mileage of the lines already sanctioned. But it is not to be supposed that railway progress will stop here, or will stop at all so long as there is a plausible project for an enterprising engineer, and a speculative public for both. Even now railway travellers are in such force as to demand a "Bradshaw," the first number of which recently appeared in Calcutta. It is of sufficiently respectable dimensions, but nothing to what it will be ten years hence. That there should be a Bradshaw at all is a sufficient anomaly in a lazy, lotus-eating country like India—where nobody is in a hurry, except for pleasure; where work, when done is done for the worker's sake, as he would take a constitutional; and where the principal drawbacks to life are "the noise of the nightingales and the litter of the roses."

THE GHOST OF MR. SENIOR.

What is a spectre?

The dictionaries tell us that a spectre is "a frightful apparition, a ghost." The popular notion of a spectre is, a figure enveloped in a long white robe with outstretched skeleton right hand, gliding noiselessly through the ruins of some deserted castle.

Spectres are the aristocracy of ghosts. If "Hodge," passing through the village churchyard late at night, happens to think he sees "something white" which frightens him out of what *he* calls his wits, he does not say he has seen a spectre, he speaks and thinks of what he saw as a ghost.

I have a theory about spectres, and it is—— but I can better explain it after I have related what I am about to tell.

The facts to which I allude occurred many years since, before table-turning, spirit-rapping, spirit hands, "et hoc genus omne," were invented. At that time, too, I did not take a nap after dinner, however attractive forty winks may now appear. I mention this lest my readers should say, "Oh, he dropped off asleep."

I was born in a small country town in the west of England; the inhabitants were principally shopkeepers and working people, and consequently I had but few companions beyond the circle of my own family. There was, however, an old gentleman, a Mr. Senior, a kind-hearted, good-tempered old man, a widower without children, who took a great fancy to me, and was never better pleased than when I was allowed to go and keep him company. He lived in a house of his own in the main street of the town; he was a cheery old gentleman, and used to delight to tell me tales of what he had seen in his youth. He had been a fur merchant, and had lived for several years at Hudson's Bay. And soon our acquaintance became intimacy, and, ere long, ripened into friendship, and few days passed without my paying a visit, longer or shorter, as home engagements permitted.

The room we used to sit in was the dining-room. Since the death of his wife Mr. Senior had seldom gone into the drawing-room. It revived painful feelings, he said; recollections of the departed one; for there still stood her piano, the tambour-frame, and her work-basket.

So we always sat in the dining-room. It was a moderate sized apartment, with nothing particular in it except a large long table, and two old-fashioned oak arm-chairs, which stood one at each end of the table, and there they always stood, whether in use or not. I used to sit in one of these chairs, Mr. Senior, as a matter of course, occupying the other.

Years fled, seed time and harvest, summer and winter, succeeded each other; I grew up to man's estate, and began to think of having an establishment of my own.

About that time my old friend died, and his relatives, wishing to make as good an income as they could out of his property, proposed to let the house furnished. After some negotiation I became the tenant, and in due time took up my abode in the house. It was rather dull at first being alone, after having been used to the cheerfulness of a family circle, and more especially in that particular house, as reminiscences of my old friend were inevitable; but I had my profession to occupy me; it took me a good deal from home, and I soon became used to my new mode of life.

Shortly after I had settled down, I had occasion to leave home for a few days, and on my return, being unexpectedly delayed on the road, I did not arrive at my house until rather late; there were several letters awaiting my return, and as I had to be at a neighbouring town early next day, and as some of the letters related to matters of urgent importance, I determined to answer them that night. I ordered what we call in our part of the country "a high tea," and, having finished it, brought the blotting-book, &c., to the table, and, sitting down in my old accustomed chair, went to work.

I had written two letters, and was about to commence a third, when, happening to raise my eyes, I saw what seemed to be my old friend sitting in the chair at the other end of the table, just as he had been used to sit there in the old time. I confess I was startled. I rubbed my eyes and looked more attentively, but there he sat, looking at me with the old benignant smile. As soon as I could collect my thoughts I got up, and feeling that there must be some delusion, went and stirred the fire, hoping to divert my mind from the subject. On looking round, to my great relief I saw that the chair was empty.

So I sat down again and went on writing, but I could not help from time to time giving a hasty glance towards the other end of the table. Suddenly, there he sat again, as distinct as if in bodily presence.

I had read that the spirits of the departed could not rest in peace under certain circumstances, and not being in a frame of mind to reason calmly, I thought that my old friend had something to communicate, so I spoke:

"Why do you come here?"

No answer.

"Can I do anything for you?"

Still dead silence.

"This won't do at all!" cried I, starting up and going round the table. But, as I moved, my old friend's form faded away.

I felt unfit for more letter-writing that night, and, shutting up the blotting-book, hastily retreated to my bedroom.

Consider, now, what it is that we do, when we *see*.

The eye is furnished inside, with a sensitive curtain, upon which are produced, or reflected, the pictures of such objects as may happen to be within the range of vision; and those pictures are, in a wonderful manner, communicated to our intelligence, so that without touching a thing at which we look, we know what the thing is. As long as the object remains before the eye, the picture of it remains on what we have called the sensitive curtain, and sometimes the picture is retained *after* the object is removed. For instance:—if we happen to look at the sun when the first dazzling effect is over, there remains on the sensitive curtain an impression, which causes us to see a round disc of a darkish colour on any object at which we may look. After a short time the disc fades, but it comes back again, once, twice, sometimes three times, according to the strength of the first impression. So, also, with figures in black, white, or any brilliant colour; if we look steadfastly for half a minute or so at a highly-coloured figure upon which a strong light is thrown, and then turn the eye to a white wall or window-blind, we see a figure of the same shape as that at which we have been gazing—this also will fade and return several times. Of course the figure is not on the wall; of course the effect is produced by an impression remaining on the eye.

Now, I do not propose to attempt to account for mistakes which people make through fear, or any other cause; we know that the eye is liable to be deceived, and that "a friendly hand-post" has, ere now, been mistaken for a ghost. What I wish to deal with is the fact that impressions are sometimes *revived* on the eye, without there being a corresponding object actually within view, and although the object which originally caused the impression may not have been seen for weeks, for months, perhaps for years. This is more likely to occur if there be anything presented to the eye suggestive merely of any one particular object at which we have been accustomed to look.

I contend, also, that imagination has something to do with the matter. If it be admitted (and it can scarcely be denied) that a complete picture may be revived on the sensitive curtain, if anything merely suggestive of such picture is presented to the eye, then it will not be difficult to understand how I, being in the room where I had been accustomed to sit with my old friend, occupying the position I was so familiar with, and looking at the very chair in which he always used to sit, had before me an object sufficiently suggestive to reproduce on the sensitive curtain of my eye not only the chair, which I did see, but also the form of my old friend, who was not present.

There is nothing which should be thought incredible in this. We experience every day sensations quite as wonderful, and more inexplicable. Take, for example, Memory. An impression is made on the mind by a particular fact. We can recal it at pleasure, as well as innumerable other events, but we don't in the least understand how it is, or by what process we remember; nor is there anything to demonstrate the existence of such, or any particular impression as existing permanently on the mind, yet we know, by every-day experience, that a very slight circumstance suggestive of any past event will suffice to bring back, as it were, the picture of such event to our mind as clearly as when the event actually took place.

Why should not the eye, or its sensitive curtain, have a reproductive faculty? And may it not exercise such faculty very readily in cases where there is any object presented to it suggestive of a former impression? Whether the

mere thinking of a particular person is sufficient to excite this reproductive faculty, I will consider on another occasion.

WHAT WAS IT?

It was not a scold, nor a cuff, nor a kick,
The wound of a sword, nor a blow from a stick,
A shot from any sort of a gun
That ever was forged beneath the sun,
A fall from a horse, nor a bite of a dog;
A burn from a torch carried out in a fog,
That made me ache confoundedly
Just where a gentleman's heart should be.

It was not a plaister, nor lotion, nor draught,
Homœopath practice, or Allopath craft,
Nor any description of patent pill,
That ever was pounded to cure or kill:
Nor the cure for nerves that are running to seed—
A sedative puff of the fragrant "weed,"
That cured my pain. 'Twas a smile for me
Just where a pretty girl's lips should be.

For my heart had been aching for many a day,
And my mind full of trouble and sorrow,
I vowed that I never would see her again;
But haunted her steps on the morrow.
I worried my friends, and neglected my work,
Was horribly jealous of stupid young Smirk,
In short, was a nuisance to hear or to see,
Just as a fellow in love should be.

Well, well! it's all over, my smile I got,
And stole something else from its pretty birth-spot,
Went home with a breast that with rapture was thrilling,
Gave cabbie a sovereign instead of a shilling,
And the sweet lips that cured me—at breakfast and tea
Are just where a gentleman's wife's should be.

CUPID'S MANUFACTORY.

The name and address of the eminent manufacturing firm of Cupid and Co. are not to be found in the Post-office Directory. I know this because I have searched the magnum opus through all its divisions without being able to discover them. Nevertheless, the firm has not only a name but a local habitation; and I have visited the habitation, been over the works, and know all about the concern. I have long aspired to possess this knowledge. Years past, when, long before the advent of the month which is popularly supposed to usher in the mating season of both birds and men, I have noticed the windows of small booksellers and stationers break out into a pictorial rash in anticipation of the Feast of St. Valentine, I have been in the habit of wondering how and where the outbreak originated. With regard to such matters I can claim a certain community of mind with his deceased majesty, King George the Third. When I see apple-dumplings I am very curious to know how the apples found their way inside the dumplings. So, for years, I was anxious to know where the valentines came from; who executed those highly-coloured illustrations of a lady and gentleman walking arm in arm up a pale brown pathway towards a salmon-coloured church in the immediate vicinity (the lady and gentleman being considerably taller than the church); who wrote that beautiful poetry where "love" is for ever sweetly linked with "dove," save occasionally when it spoils the rhyme by a disposition to "rove," or retire into a "grove," and where "twine" is so largely employed in the penultimate lines as to convey the idea that the poet ran his poetry off a reel and made it up in balls; who printed them, who coloured them, who stuck Cupids and transfixed hearts upon them; how, in fact, they found their way into those shop windows, to be offered to an affectionate public at prices varying from one farthing up to two pound two?

I have been to the mint, and, having seen love's tokens coined, I am now about to describe the process. No matter how I discovered the mint; suffice it that, from information I received, I proceeded there, and found Cupid and Company actively engaged in their business, on extensive premises situated in Love-lane, number thirty-five. Perhaps you are unacquainted with Love-lane: may never have heard of it before. Well,—no matter; if you should ever go there, you will find it remarkably like Red Lion-square. Paint the picture how you will, you cannot make anything but a red lion of it. However, Love-lane is better, as it gets rid of an unpleasant association with the Mendicity Society, an idiot asylum, and several forlorn institutes, with dirty doorsteps and cobwebbed windows. The outside of Cupid's manufactory is perhaps a little disenchanting to the visitor, who has been drawing fancy pictures of it in his mind coming along. If you expect wreaths and festoons, you will be disappointed; if you look for cornucopias, you will not find them; if you have called up a vision of Cupid swinging on a rope of roses over the doorway, you will not realise that vision. You find simply a plain brick house, bearing no other emblem of the trade carried on within than a pair of iron extinguishers on each side of the doorway, in which, by a considerable stretch of the imagination, you may conceive the torch of Hymen to have been occasionally quenched, at a period prior to the introduction of gas. Neither the red rose, nor the blue violet, nor the sweet carnation, embowers the windows; these being wholly unadorned, rather dingy, and provided each with a wire blind, on which are painted, in the severest prose, the words "Cupid and Co., Manufacturers."

Entering that mundane doorway, and wiping my feet on that cocoa-nut mat, of the earth earthy, I could not conceive the realm of sublimated fancy which lay beyond. With a lively impression of what was afterwards revealed to me, I feel now that it was like going up the greasy gallery-stairs of a theatre, to find the transformation scene on, and all the fairies gracefully reposing in the Bower of Bliss. I was not, however, inducted to the mysteries too suddenly. A youth, in all the elegance of turned-up shirt-sleeves, came and took my card, and I had to wait in the counting-house—Cupid's

counting-house!—until he returned, which he eventually did, quite at his leisure, whistling what at first hearing appeared to be Love's Young Dream, but which I presently recognised as a melody less in harmony with the genius loci —namely, The Whole Hog or None. Would I step this way? I did so with a nervous hesitation natural to the novelty of my position, and next moment found myself confronted with a remarkably good-looking little gentleman, who acknowledged, in answer to my polite insinuation in that direction, that he was Cupid. I don't know that I was quite prepared for the personal appearance he presented. It had never occurred to me to picture the God of Love, even in his manufacturing capacity, otherwise than in a full suit of wings and with a bow and arrow. But here he stood before me in a black frock-coat and a pair of—possibly Sydenham—trousers. A little reflection, however, reconciled me to the make up. I had thought of Cupid as he appears on high days and holidays. But here he was "in business." No doubt the wings were carefully doubled down under the broadcloth, and the bow and arrow were probably hung up in the best bedroom with the pink fleshings, ready for Sunday. Cupid received me with a courtesy which was most flattering, considering that I had come there, a stranger, boldly preferring a request to be shown over his establishment, and initiated into the mysteries of his craft. He was ready to show me all without reserve, and, leading the way, he introduced me at once into the press-room.

It was like a chamber in the Mint. The knobbed arms of five or six fly-presses were swinging about so near each other that it seemed impossible to steer through them without being dashed to pieces. I did not try. The presses were stopped, and I was shown how a plain sheet of paper was prepared for a lace-edged valentine. Every one is familiar with the process of die-stamping, so this part of the operation will not require minute description. The paper is laid upon the matrice, the arms of the press are swung round and the die descends, embossing the paper by one pressure. But the dies here are no ordinary dies, and the process is yet far from complete. Each die consists of a heavy square block of iron enclosed with the matrice in a metal box, which is furnished with two handles like the legs of a pair of tongs, for the convenience of the operator. The design, after being drawn upon the surface of the iron, is hammered into it by means of steel punches. The iron of the die, of course, is softer—or rather I should say less hard—than the material of the punch; but when the design is completed the die is hardened by the usual process of tempering. A great number and variety of punches are required to execute a design. For example, in an embossed border every little hexagon, every dot, and every flower, requires a separate punch. The execution of a design, therefore, is a tedious and expensive process. There are, perhaps, a hundred different dies about the room, and some of them have cost nearly twenty pounds. The matrices are made of millboard, and, ranged on shelves round the walls, look like a library of well-thumbed dog-eared books. I am now standing aside, and the fly-presses are in full swing embossing two or three sheets of paper each per minute. Some of these sheets are plain; others contain a picture in the centre, as, for example, the before-mentioned lady and gentleman, who, with the pathway and the church, have already been printed on the paper by the familiar process of lithography. They are now receiving embossed borders. The next process is to convert these borders into paper lace, with all the interstices proper to the particular kind which the design represents. The dies are removed from the presses, and with the embossed sheets handed over to a distinct set of workmen in another room. These workmen, who practise this branch of the manufacture solely and exclusively, lay the embossed paper neatly on the die, adjusting it exactly by means of regulating pins at the corners, and then with flat iron tools covered with fine sand-paper, rub off the projecting bosses on the paper. This process is very neatly and rapidly performed, and a strip of Valenciennes or Mechlin starts out under the tool at every rub. In this room a dozen workmen do nothing else all day long but use the sand-paper file. It is a very magical way of making lace, and the operation seems easy, but it is not so easy as it seems. It requires great nicety of touch not to tear the paper. One of the pressmen down stairs, who essayed to complete the process for my benefit, signally failed with the sand-paper file, and tore what might have been a gorgeous messenger of love, all to tatters.

Let us follow our valentine step by step from its cradle to—I will not say its grave, but to that neat white box in which it is packed, with others of its kind, to be sent out to the trade. Let us say that we begin with the sheet of paper bearing the plain, unadorned presentment of the lady and gentleman lovingly wending their way towards the sacred fane. We have seen them encompassed by an embossed border; we have seen that border magically transformed into lace. But still, with all this, the valentine remains in the penny plain condition. Now, however, it passes into the twopence coloured department—a long room, containing some twenty neat-handed nymphs seated at a bench, each with a little pot of liquid water-colour at her elbow. Valentine comes into the hand of nymph number one. Nymph lays it flat before her, and places over its surface a perforated sheet of cardboard, the perforations in which correspond exactly with, say the pathway. The brush is dipped in the pot of pale brown and daubed over the perforations. Behold the pale brown pathway! The valentine passes to nymph number two, who uses another stencil plate of cardboard, and daubs in the salmon-coloured church. Number three in the same manner dashes in the gentleman's blue coat, number four his yellow waistcoat, number five his lilac continuations, number six the lady's green

mantle, number seven the lady's pink bonnet, while it probably remains for other nymphs to clothe the fields with verdure, and indicate the smiling morn by tipping the hills with gold. Thus a highly-coloured valentine passes through at least half a dozen hands in the process of colouring, or pooning, as it is technically called. The pooning cards, perforated with all sorts of irregular holes, and daubed with various colours, have a very odd appearance, lying together in a heap on a bench. A stranger to these mysteries could not possibly guess the use of such queer things. He would probably arrive at the conclusion that they were the efforts, not of methodical genius, but of most unmethodical madness.

When our valentine has passed through this room, it is, for all ordinary purposes, complete, and, with a lace border and highly-coloured illustration, may be sold at prices varying from sixpence to half-a-crown; but if it aspire to value itself at five shillings or half a guinea, it must yield to further adornment in another department. Again, a long room occupied by nymphs, each one having at her elbow a pot, not of colour this time, but of glue. Strewed before each girl in apparent confusion, but really in regularly-assorted heaps, lie hearts and darts and doves and bows and arrows, and rose-buds and true lovers' knots, and torches of Hymen, and every variety of emblem appertaining to love and matrimony. These ornaments are cut out of every kind of material by means of punches. Some are paper, some are silk and velvet, some tinsel and gold-leaf. The business of the girls here is to stick these ornaments upon the valentines, so as perhaps to enclose the picture in a posie of flowers and emblems. Our lady and gentleman are now under treatment. You will observe that there is an unadorned space between the border and the picture. This is about to be filled up, and the basis of the operation is a series of paper springs. Cupid, who is in close attendance, explaining everything in the most obliging manner, says to the nymph, "Show the gentleman how you make paper springs." It is done in a moment. A strip of writing-paper is doubled lengthways alternately backwards and forwards three times —in the form of a pipe-light—and then cut into lengths of about half an inch. The lower ends of these springs are fastened to the valentine with glue, and then upon the upper surfaces are fixed strips of plain flat paper. Upon these strips the nymph, according to a design which lies before her, arranges flowers and love-knots and all kinds of devices. Immediately over the church she glues on a gilt Cupid; at the corners she places birds'-nests with eggs; down the sides, festoons of flowers, relieved here and there with united hearts and crossed darts and lyres and flying doves. This decoration forms a pretty bas-relief frame to the picture, and the paper springs which support it permit the frame to be pressed flat for the convenience of packing. Each of the girls in this department is at work upon a different design, some of which are exceedingly pretty and tasteful. Some, too, are very expensive. Here, for example, is one containing in the centre a really well-executed picture, in the ivory miniature style, of Cupid, surrounded by a rich ornamental border studded with pearls. The price of this elegant article, enclosed in an enamelled box neatly tied up with white satin ribbon, is two guineas. I am naturally curious to know if many of these are sold. The answer to my query is, "A good many." I am informed, however, that the most expensive chiefly go to the colonies. I could imagine a gold-digger buying this valentine with the pearls, and paying for it with a nugget. It seems very absurd to give two guineas for a valentine, but the one under notice really appears to be worth the money. It is a most elaborate affair, and, as a piece of delicate workman and workwomanship, *looks* to be better worth the price than many fancy articles of more intrinsic value which we see in the windows of the jewellers. The brightly-coloured varnished flowers that are used in this department have hitherto been made almost exclusively in Germany, but Cupid informs me, with great satisfaction, that he will shortly be in a position to compete with the Germans on their own ground, and dispense with foreign aid altogether.

Our lady and gentleman are now proceeding to church under every imaginable circumstance of glory. Cupid keeps watch over them with more than a cherub's personality, doves flutter round them, flowers bloom at their feet, while the air is laden with a rich perfume, emanating, I am bound to state, from a pinch of Jockey Club artfully inserted in a piece of cotton wool, and stowed away under the exalted seat of Cupid. Still our lady and gentleman have to pass through another ordeal. They must step into the next room and be examined. Nymphs again are the examiners, and there are six of them. They sit here permanently, as a committee of taste. If there be anything wrong, a dove flying with its feet in the air, a Cupid standing on his head, or a rose violating the laws of nature by growing downward, the lady and gentleman are sent back to have their glorious surroundings put to rights; if not, they receive the imprimatur of approval, and are placed in cardboard boxes to be delivered to the trade.

In following the progress of our valentine from the embossing-room to the finishing department, we have passed in review about sixty hands, nearly forty of these being girls, the rest men and boys. In all the departments the work struck me as being of a healthy and cheerful kind. The rooms are well lighted and airy, and the girls exhibit none of the languor and weariness which are painfully apparent in the workrooms of the milliner and dressmaker. They are very neatly dressed, and some of them are very pretty, and these appearances, together with a briskness of manner and a cheerfulness of expression, convinced me that if the Song of the Valentine were written, it would form a happy contrast to the Song of the Shirt. The girls work from eight o'clock in the morning till seven o'clock at night, with intervals for

dinner and tea, and their wages range from five to fifteen shillings a week, the average being ten for the skilled hands, and five for young beginners—mere children, who certainly could not earn as much money at anything else. Although there are slack and busy seasons in this trade, as in every other, the employment is pretty regular all the year round. At this moment artists and die-sinkers are at work for next year. About June or July their designs will be finished, and copies struck off for the travellers who go out with their pattern-books, as early as August. And there are articles besides valentines made here: articles which come in at unpoetical seasons, to keep the machinery of the establishment in full play. Among those lace dies in the press-room, you will find a considerable number of dies for printing trade marks—labels for bottles, and tinsel devices for linen and calico, duly registered—to imitate which is now a misdemeanour, punishable with fine and imprisonment. The trade marks for linen and cotton fabrics, however, are quite in the valentine style, and only fall short of ideality in so far as they are minus poetry. Here, for example, is an oval device in silver paper, in the midst of which a lady of the ballet is standing on the very tips of her toes, gracefully surrounding her lovely form by a scarf—the whole being designed to give the stamp of authenticity to a bale of muslin, which is possibly destined to be cut up for bridal garments. I scarcely expected in Cupid's manufactory to meet with an important and significant commercial fact. But I did. It is, that the demand for trade marks for cotton goods, which fell off suddenly at the beginning of the American war, and which a year ago ceased almost entirely, is now again becoming active. A sign of reviving trade among the symbols of languishing love, which I commend to the notice of the City-article writers. It is also worthy of note, that the export trade in valentines is reviving. That, too, was damaged by the Transatlantic struggle: there being naturally no corner for love, in hearts inflamed with anger and hate.

But let not considerations of commerce and politics interfere with the higher claims of art. Two of the questions which I often put to myself in the days when I was wholly ignorant of the great valentine economy yet remain unanswered. Who draws the pictures? Who writes the poetry? For a practical elucidation of this mystery we very properly and fitly go up-stairs to the higher regions of the establishment. In a well-lighted room, exclusively devoted to art, we find six draughtsmen transferring their designs to stone. The designs are highly finished and elaborately coloured, and some of them are really beautiful. They don't look so well when they are printed, for much the same reason that a wood-engraving rarely comes up to the original drawing. They are spoilt by the heavy-handed process of colouring, as the drawing on wood is often marred by the engraver. There are no middle tints. It goes, if you will excuse the popular phrase, the whole hog or none. Bright blue or nothing, blood red and no surrender! Looking, however, at some of the drawings, I can detect no fault in them. I have seen worse things on the stairs of the Royal Academy. But these designs are intended for the superior order of valentines. The common kinds and the comic kinds are drawn out of doors. Nothing coarse or vulgar is issued from this establishment, and the common specimens are only common, in so far as the paper is inferior and the drawing is dashed in with more regard to effect than finish. The subjects of some of the comic valentines are copied from drawings in Punch and his humorous contemporaries, but the great majority of them are original, and deal mainly with the passing follies and fashions of the day—crinoline, the Dundreary whiskers, the jacket coat, the spoon bonnet, and so forth. The regular comic artist of the establishment—a very clever fellow, by the way—does not work on the premises: his fancy being probably of too buoyant a nature to brook being chained to a bench, or controlled by regular hours. I understand that he is a highly prosperous person, that he drives up to the door in a Hansom cab, and is very sharp and short with the head of the firm. The poet, too, works out; but it was my happiness to meet him on the door-step on taking my leave. I am bound to say that he looked like a poet. He had raven ringlets, wore a cloak with a velvet collar, and had a fine phrensy in his eye. I caught it just as it was rolling, and I said to myself, "Nascitur, non fit." What does he sing of our lady and gentleman churchward-bound along the pale brown pathway?

> The path before me gladly would I trace,
> With one who's dearest to my constant heart,
> To yonder church, the holy sacred place,
> Where I my vows of Love would fain impart;
> And in sweet wedlock's bonds unite with thee,
> Oh, then, how blest my life would ever be!

And there is that rather sporting-looking young man, in the green waistcoat and the pink necktie, grasping by the hand the generally blue maiden in the gipsy hat under the cliffs—apparently, of Dover—who thus pours forth his soul:

> Ne'er doubt, fair maid, the vows I make,
> A constant heart no time can shake;
> Rather than cause it e'er to wander,
> Time, the true heart, makes grow fonder.

Our poet is evidently of a serious turn, and given to the sentimental and the pathetic; finds it difficult to screw himself down to the low level of the comic. There is quite a touch of the pastoral style in the opening line of his satire upon the lady in the spoon bonnet:

> Tell me, gentle lady fair,
> Why such ugly things you wear.
> Surely all your wits are fled,
> A spoon to carry on your head.

He is almost didactic in his severity upon the gentleman with the scrubbing-brush beard, who is admiring himself in the looking-glass:

Looking at thyself within the glass,
You appear lost in admiration;
You deceive yourself, and think, alas!
You are a wonder of creation.

If it be alleged that the poet-laureate of Love is somewhat halt, it must be remembered that Love himself is blind. I have not heard that a butt of sherris sack forms part of the reward of Cupid's laureate; but I believe his verses are estimated as being worth twopence a line, which is, at any rate, a penny over the conventionally standard price of prose. At this price, the poem just quoted would come to eightpence. But the great difficulty in dealing with the valentine poet is to make him comprehend that brevity is not only the soul of wit, but the essence of economy. His efforts are very frequently vain, owing to his strong disposition to spin the subject out to twelve lines, and make an even shilling of it. There are many pounds of poetry up-stairs that would have been declined with thanks had they not been furnished by contract.

It might be imagined that the hard practical nature of our time had tended in some degree to bring the sending of valentines into contempt, as being a practice beneath the dignity of the age. But this is by no means the case. Cupid informs me that, in the height of his season, he turns out two hundred and fifty pounds' worth of valentines a week, and at these times he pays about a hundred and sixty pounds a week in wages. That his business is yearly on the increase is proved by the annual report of the Postmaster-General, which shows that, while the number of valentines which passed through the London office in 1862 was four hundred and thirty thousand, in 1863 it was upwards of four hundred and fifty thousand. The iron of our age has not entered the national soul so deeply, after all.

OLD CLOTHES.

Nothing, perhaps, is so full of sad suggestiveness as an old-clothes shop. It is an epitome of human life, working out in its own dumb way the form, if not the solution, of many of the problems which oppress us, and setting forth in faded, melancholy fashion, the vanity of all earthly things, and how transitory is all created beauty. Each coat and hat and limp loose gown might be a text for preachers, and no one need sit vacant for want of thought while ragged remnants of past glories are mouldering in the dingy air beside him. The histories of whole families are written there, and the saddest tragedies that evil days and folly can enact together are phrased in those shabby wardrobes, offering their decayed gentlehood to the baser world. What analogies may we not find and make there! The flimsy tags of Florinda the stage-duchess, come down by steady degradation to Dolly the dairymaid, and that Dolly a Whitechapel dairymaid, who would as soon attempt to milk an elephant as a cow—why that one single image is an essay in itself on all things sham and seeming! The fine velvet bonnet that once bent its stateliness to Royalty in the Park, passing through the crush-mill of time and servile uses, till it falls to final ruin on the head of a crossing sweeper—could the Preacher himself have found a fitter example for his piteous cry over the falling of the mighty, and the vanity of vanities of which life and the earth are made? Look at that soiled, worn baby's frock hanging up by the torn sleeve, and marked at just a few pence, so few as to be within the compass of a very beggar. Soiled and worn, the texture of that baby's frock can scarcely be made out from here, but take it in your hand and examine it for yourself; you will find it to be of richest silk, fit for the coronation robes of the Queen of Sheba. That was the countess's court-dress one gorgeous June day. By degrees my lady's gown lost little and little, and more and more, of its lustrous loveliness, till it grew dull enough for Abigail, who pranced to church in it on Sundays, proud as my lady herself on that memorable presentation day. Then it went to Abigail's little nieces at the greengrocer's yonder — the standard Sunday frock for many years, till at last cut down to baby's requirements, whence, when baby had grown big, was no beyond. And then it came to the old-clothes shop, and perhaps to the singing beggar with a borrowed baby in the streets.

Look at that girl's ball-dress, once so light and pure; useless, if you will, like all a girl's pleasures—the mere froth of human life, but of the froth that floated Venus Anadyomene to the Cyprian shore—and see what it is now: a ball-dress still, but fit only for a gathering of chimney-sweeps, each in his own colours, sable splashed with gules. Have the freshness and purity gone out of her soul as they have out of her dress? From being fit comrade of the vestals, with robes as snowy and spotless as theirs, has she fallen into ranks which the soil of burnt-out ashes and the stain of impure fires have sealed and marked to enduring degradation? That torn, soiled, tattered ball-dress, once so fresh in its virginal grace and modesty, ah me! it is no pleasant sight to see it swinging here, crushed into disgraceful foulness, among these worn-out castings of recklessness and ruin! Side by side with this hangs a widow's "suit of sables," glossy and fresh, the crispness of the crape untouched, and the depth of blackness in the solemn stuff by no means rusted by use. There they lie, handy for the first poor weeping applicant, who will not stop to ask why they look so new and feel so fresh, or how it comes to pass that the snowy cap is snowy yet, or why the deep crape veil has no tear-dimmed spaces on it. Grief and poverty together will blind one eye and open the other; for when our own hearts are saturated with sorrow we have seldom any sympathy left running over for balm to the sorrows of others; and when the metal lining of our purses has fallen away to a mere glaze, like picture-frame gilding, we are not often solicitous as to the reason why we obtain a shilling's worth for our worn-out six-

pence. Enough for us if it be honestly obtained. Of the terrible pressure from without which brought it down to this lower level, we neither think nor ask.

A tragedy lies in that well-made, substantial, but somewhat old-fashioned coat of fine broadcloth, a trifle worn about the seams and elbows, but in excellent preservation yet, and worth, even in its decadence, more than the newest and most fashionably-cut paletot of sham and shoddy to be met with. A good, plain, substantial, and thoroughly respectable coat; a coat that tells its own history of the paternal acres so long held intact in the family; of the solid English worth and stainless English name which have been sowed and reaped for all these generations, and which now have come to the hammer like the slightest thing of yesterday bought only for its hour of shine and glitter. We can easily picture all that has brought this coat of honest broadcloth to the ragman's shop—to the companionship of stage-spangles and the soiled ball-dresses of feather-headed girls, not careful of playing with fire; we can run through the causes, one by one, that broke the ploughshare short off the yoke before the sowing-time was done, so that the corn grew up choked with weeds and couch-grass, and strewn with flaring poppies, fiery red for shame of flaunting where the children's bread should have been. Bad companions; the facile weakness that cannot say No, and that consents to iniquity because too soft-tempered to resist; the fatal love for what was unworthy—a love that grew like flaring poppies among the corn, and took up the place of the quieter and nobler growths, yet an honest love, too, in the man's heart, and therefore of more pernicious influence; the large-handedness, traditional to the race, widening into lavishness, and lavishness degenerating into extravagance, and extravagance losing itself in the black peat-bog of ruin—yes, we can read off all its history in the worn seams and elbows of that stout old-fashioned coat of finest broadcloth, lying now in the old-clothes shop to be bought and worn by burglar, thief, or sharper, at pleasure. And there, down in the rich heart of Kent, lie the broken ploughshare and the rusty harrow—there the mother sits by the darkened casement, looking over the fair fields that were once hers, and that are now a stranger's; there, in the quiet churchyard, sleeps the brave old father whose heart would have broken if he had lived to see this day; while, on his tombstone for a resting-place, sits the fair-faced ruin who has helped his son to his fall. Scarlet poppies are in her hand, and her eyes are blue as that blue scabious at her feet, her golden hair hangs down in tendrils like the curling stems of the climbing vetches which have overrun the corn-fields, and she sits on the old man's gravestone and laughs to her companion, and lures him, too, on to his destruction, as she has lured on others, and will again. But that companion is not the son of the old yeoman. She has done with him; ever since she wrung the last shilling from him, got by the sale of his father's broadcloth coat to the old-clothesman in Houndsditch.

Another sad tale is told in those motheaten blankets; large, soft, warm—fit for a royal bed when they were new, and would be still, had they been properly cared for. But they belonged to the household of a careless woman; a woman who scouted homely work and ways—who sat with her feet on the fender and read novels, while her children sprawled on the ground untended, and her household went to pieces for want of the sustaining hand to knit it together. She started with a fair wind and all sails set, when she put out into the great sea of life and loving marriage: but she brought her ship before long to shameful wreck by her carelessness and indolence, and the evil piloting of neglect. She let the moth eat into her blankets, and the rust eat into her steel, and the damp mildew her silk and linen, and the mice devour her cheese and bacon; till her husband one day saw himself gazetted as a bankrupt, because his wife liked to read novels better than to keep house, and preferred the heroisms of romance to the nobleness of reality. There are more motheaten blankets in middle-class houses than one would like to contemplate, if one but knew the secrets of store-closets: the homely duty of careful housekeeping having fallen into disfavour of late among the tribe of fine ladies.

Here, too, are baskets of second-hand baby-clothes—layettes, as our neighbours call them—the bows and ends of white ribbons gone long ago, and the bright pink flannel washed into a melancholy salmon-colour, as unlike the radiancy of its first freshness as the hoary sinner is unlike the innocent boy. Perhaps that basket of baby-clothes has done duty for a long succession of little strangers; so no wonder if all the finery has disappeared, if the bows and tags of white satin ribbon have been cut off, if the worked frills and flounces have more rents than broideries in them. For the first, mamma thought it no hardship to strip her yet young marriage clothes of half their prettiness, that she might make baby look the child of a prince at least. Older mothers smiled in their hearts when they saw mamma snipping off her fineries; they knew to what a peaceful state of languid indifference in the matter of ribbons and laces she would come by the time the sixth or even the fifth had to be provided for; and how a lopsided strip of old grey-bearded Saxony, if only serviceable to its purpose, would be quite as acceptable in her eyes as the exactest parallelogram of delicate rose-colour bound with inch-wide ribbon exquisitely worked. At present, it is all the difference between the new and the old, the strange and the well-used, the instinct just awakened, and all blushing in its emotion, and the instinct become quite comely and matronly, and taking to its duties in a matter-of-fact kind of way, solicitous only for the expedient and the actual necessity. Motherhood and baby-clothes are not the only things in this life that lose their sharpness by yearly wear!

Near to these baskets holding the wardrobes

of the small people, are bundles of faded marriage finery, where all that was once white has now turned a pale cream yellow, and where dust and smoke have cast long pencil lines of dingy grey. The wedding-bells are silent now—there may have been a passing bell since their last peal rang out its "molten golden notes"—the wedding-feast is cold, and the wedding-dress is old and faded. Yet, perhaps, the hearts that bounded then in joy together, beat still in the full unison of love and trust, and the lives that gave themselves in mutual troth have never failed their vows or wished the words unspoken. In the wreck and ruin of so much that lies about us, it is precious as sleep to the weary to believe in the quiet continuance of love and the happy issue of faith!

It is not pleasant to see a veteran soldier's coat hanging up for sale in a miserable rag-store. It has an ungrateful look, as if both coat and wearer had gone to the dogs since their last day of usefulness to the country, and no one cared to inquire how, or why, or if any of the pain could be averted. We ought to take better care of the old defenders of our hearths and homes than that, and not let the country's livery and the badge of sacrifice and valour come to open grief, swinging like a scarecrow among the graves of the dead.

Close to the old scarlet coat dangle a pair of pink silk stockings, of ample size and perfect manufacture—fit for the legs of the grandest lord in the peerage. To which, indeed, they have belonged; for they are silk stockings that have once been gartered with that courted bit of blue, but are now to be sold to Snooks for money. Other things are to be sold to Snooks for money in this early afternoon of the nineteenth century: things which once were to be had only by the sharp logic of the sword, or through the pure descent of blood.

Look at that heap of linen rags; perhaps the most noticeable things of all in the collection. Those rags were once the snowy wrapper of a queen; but, passing down by the slow stages of successive uses, they came at last to be mere rags—rags pure and simple—good for dressing the poor man's sores in hospitals. And now, having fulfilled all the purposes possible in their present form, they are to go into the paper mill, there to become the medium of the best thoughts and the noblest instruction of our time. It is pleasant to think of that transformation; and how, from stately beauty to homely use and pitiful charity, they mount up again into even a higher world than their pristine highest, and become the bearers of good words and the carriers of good thoughts to a thousand souls seeking eagerly for the light which shall know no night. But, indeed, everything has its uses. Even the miserable rags and tatters of the lowest outcast have their appointed way for the benefit of the world. Was there not once a Lord of Flies? Jupiter coming down from Olympus, where, as Zeus on the thunderbolt, he had been Sovereign of Gods and Men, to make himself the immediate patron of the fly? The meaning of the myth may have been—one meaning generally serving the purpose of explanation quite as well as another—that even the vilest and most noxious thing that lives, has a special usefulness in the divine economy, and a special place appointed in the divine ordering; like the outcast's rags and tatters, which come to final and nobler uses to the world at large.

Another noticeable feature in the old-clothes shop is the ingenious way in which old things are furbished up to pass for new, and the clever manipulation by which flaws are hidden, deficiencies supplied, the worst parts put out of sight altogether, and the only slightly soiled made to look unsullied by dexterous juxtaposition. All life is only a marshalling of comparisons; and good is not to be found in absolutes, look where you will. These shabby garments, furbished up to look like new, serve the purpose of novelty to the buyer; as old opinions, and gouty thoughts, and worn-out systems, and philosophies dying of atrophy and fatigue, polished up with plate leather, and steeped in benzine-collas, and cut and carved into new shapes and modes, pass for quite original with the unknowing, not quick at the hall-mark or clever in the generation of the loom.

UNDER THE ROSE.

A LOVELY May evening. Twilight melting into moonlight—and it wanted only a week to the wedding. Jack Wyvill believed himself the luckiest man alive, and his Minnie the prettiest little darling in Christendom. He assured himself of these pleasing truths a score of times as he marched away towards Skelton Place, smoking his after-dinner cigar, with his honest hands thrust deep into his pockets, and his honest heart free from every shadow of care. He had come down from town, by the six o'clock train, a day earlier than Minnie had been bidden to expect him; and now he was off for a chat with the squire about the business that had carried him to London, and a glimpse of her before sleeping.

He had a two miles' walk before him, but the way by the fields was pleasant, and his thoughts were excellent company. He anticipated Minnie's exclamations of surprised delight, her face of joy at his return, and insensibly quickened his steps, flinging away the end of his cigar as he came within sight of the gate into the plantation that bordered the park. It was quite dusk in the wood; but he could have followed the narrow path under the fir-trees blindfold; he had known it ever since he was a lad, and for several months past he had traversed it almost daily. The evening air was heavy with the scent of the wild hyacinths, which grew here in lavish profusion, and Jack snuffed it up with a grateful sense of pleasure, feeling quite pastoral in his happiness, until suddenly his nostrils were delicately assailed by another perfume much less sylvan but much more familiar—the perfume, in short, of a capital cigar.

"Who has the squire got staying with him?" speculated he; for the squire was not given to smoke, and this odour Jack inhaled was not the odour of gamekeeper's or gardener's unfastidious pipe. He looked behind and he looked before, and peered through the trees on either hand; but seeing no one, and not being covetous just then of any society except Minnie's, he went straight on his way to the house, without further investigation. The squire was taking his customary forty winks in the library after dinner, and as Jack refused to disturb him, he was ushered into the drawing room, where the butler told him he would find Lady Wallace; but "Miss Minnie was out somewhere with Miss Wharton."

Jack did not approve of Minnie's tempting the dew after nightfall; he experienced a chill sensation of disappointment at her absence, and Lady Wallace's drowsy welcome did not warm him.

"Who is it?" asked she, raising herself from the couch, where she, too, had been taking a brief nap. "Oh, Mr. Wyvill, is it you? We none of us expected you back until to-morrow or the day after."

"My business with the lawyers was done, and there was nothing else to stay in town for," said he.

"And of course you were eager to be at home. Minnie would tell you in her letters that her friend Miss Wharton was here. They went out together for a turn on the terrace about half an hour ago. They will be in soon, or perhaps you would like to go in quest of them?"

"No, I'll wait. They were not on the terrace five minutes since, and I might miss them if I went into the gardens. That is the conservatory door—here they are!"

Yes, here they were. Minnie entered first, with a black lace shawl thrown over her golden curls, and a bright natural rose on her cheek, which deepened to a burning blush when she espied her lover.

"Oh, Jack, was it you in the wood? You gave us such a fright!" cried she, and ran forward to meet him.

"You should not go into the wood so late, Minnie," said her aunt. "It is damp and unwholesome."

Jack Wyvill was as generous-tempered and as little suspicious as any gentleman in Yorkshire; but he became sensible of a very uncomfortable spasm of doubt and dread clutching at his heart when he saw Miss Wharton furtively twitch Minnie's sleeve, and give her a warning glance.

"Yes, I came through the wood; who was there with you?" said he, dropping the cordial hand that she had given him with such a pretty frankness and affection.

"Nobody; we were alone," was the unhesitating reply; and then the beaming blue eyes, which were the truthfulest eyes in the world, lifted themselves to his face, and looked straight at him with blank, questioning amazement. It seemed to Jack that Miss Wharton again passed unnecessarily near them in going towards the door, and he was sure she gave Minnie another stealthy admonition; for Minnie turned her head quickly towards her friend, and then saying she would return in a few minutes, followed her out of the room.

Jack Wyvill felt like a man in a bad dream. He had never met Miss Wharton before, but he had heard of her as a very sporting young woman, and at first sight he loathed her. Was she teaching his darling Minnie deceitful ways? It was Minnie's sweet innocent ingenuousness that made half her charm. If those fair candid eyes of hers took any veil of slyness, they were not the eyes he could see love in. There *must* have been somebody in the wood with them. He was very impetuous; he was very angry; he was more than half in a mind to go away. It was very lucky Lady Wallace broke up his stormy reverie by a request that he would ring the bell for tea; for that common-place action gave him time to reconsider himself, and partially to smother his unworthy suspicions. For had he ever had cause to doubt of his pure white Minnie before? Never, never! And he must not doubt of her now. Still that cigar, that fiery blush—that blush not of joy only, but of confusion. What *could* she be concealing from him? Dear child! what could she have to conceal? Need he be a jealous fool because Miss Wharton was odious? Still that cigar!

At this point of his meditation, Miss Wharton reappeared, looking perfectly cool, and amiable and easy—almost too easy to be natural; for there was a touch of swagger in her manner that was far from prepossessing. Jack Wyvill eyed her askance, and wondered in his own mind how his sweet little Minnie had ever come to call her friend. She was a middle-sized, broad-built figure of a woman, with square shoulders, flat chest, long arms, and a singular ungainliness of gait. She had a certain power of countenance which redeemed her irregularity of feature. Her eyes were handsome, her brow was wide, her hair was beautiful and abundant. At the lower section of her visage no one voluntarily glanced twice, unless he were a student of physiognomy, which Jack Wyvill was not. He looked at her and did not like her, but he could not have given any valid reason *why*, except that he did not like ugly women, and she was the ugliest he had ever seen. But ugly or not, Miss Wharton was clever, and she knew it. She had more humour and originality than commonly fall to the lot of women; and she prided herself on the possession of that verbal wit which consists in utter unscrupulousness of speech, and whets itself with equal gusto on the foibles of friend or foe. She was ingrained with small vanities, and swathed about with elaborate affectations; but she had that force of character which assimilates such vanities and affectations until they seem more like the genuine out-come of nature than the assumption of art. Indeed, the shrewdest observer would have been hard put to it, to say where in Miss Wharton nature ended and art began.

She was popular in society rather than otherwise, for though utterly intolerant of fools,

she had great tact, and knew as well how to ingratiate herself where she had an object in view as how to avoid offence on all occasions. She was not so much masculine as she was mannish. She rode to hounds, and talked stable with not more blunders than are inevitable to a woman who cultivates that sort of lore on stray numbers of the Field, and is but part owner of one third-rate hack; she sang a good second to anybody's song, took a hand at whist or at loo, and could always cap a good story with a better.

Her father had ruined a fair estate on the turf, and she now lived with a broken-down brother of similar tastes, on an encumbered remnant of it, about five-and-twenty miles from Skelton Place. When the elder Wharton died, he besought Squire Conyers, his life-long friend, to be kind to his motherless daughter; and though Lady Wallace disliked her from the first as a companion for Minnie, the squire kept his promise by annually inviting her to join them, in their sea-side trip to Scarborough, Whitby, or Filey, as the case might be. There was a difference of six years between the girls' ages, but they struck up a friendly alliance by the rule of contraries, to which both had continued outwardly staunch down to the present day, when Miss Wharton was four-and-twenty, and Minnie Conyers was just eighteen.

This was Miss Wharton's first visit to Skelton Place, but she was skilfully manœuvring that it should not be her last, and the chances were ten to one that she would carry her point. She had won over Lady Wallace not only to forgive her eccentricities, but almost to admire them, and the squire was quite at her feet. He protested that she had had the narrowest escape in the world of being a very handsome woman, and that as it was, when she warmed up after dinner or by candlelight, she put all merely pretty, puling faces quite out of countenance—in which the squire was perfectly just.

Minnie did not present herself in the drawing-room until some time after her friend, and as the squire and tea came in simultaneously with her, Jack Wyvill had nothing to do but to be himself again as far as he could, and take his part in the general conversation. He did not achieve perfect success in either effort, for he was very ill-at-ease, and Minnie wore a vexed, puzzled air of bewilderment such as he had never seen in her before. The good squire was, happily, obtuse; he congratulated Jack on his prompt return from town, with one or two sly allusions which brought the rosy-red into Minnie's face; he talked about coming events on the turf, and the four-year-old he was going to enter for the October Meeting at York; then asked what the world of London was doing, all in his round-about, after-dinner way, until ten o'clock struck by the timepiece over the chimney, and Jack rose to depart.

It was his custom to leave the house by the conservatory, whence he could strike across the garden and the park in a direct line towards his own home; and it had been Minnie's duty and privilege of late to go with him, and let him out at the glass door opening on the terrace. She looked rather shy of her office to-night, but as there was kindness and invitation in his overcast face she did not hold back, and they passed silently side by side between the banks of fragrance, neither caring to be the first to speak, until just at the last Minnie laid an impetuous hand on his arm, and whispered, tearfully, "Jack, you are angry with me, and you don't tell me why."

"I am not angry with *you*, Minnie, but I don't like your mannish friend," said he.

"Hush, Jack, she will hear you!" And, half laughing, half alarmed, she put up a hasty finger to close his indiscreet lips.

"I don't care if she does," was the reckless response.

"But you must care for grieving me. She has a thousand oddities, but she has a thousand good points as well. If you knew her better, you would say so. Ask papa, and he will tell you the same. Aunt Mary is beginning to like her too, and it is not everybody Aunt Mary likes." (Aunt Mary was Lady Wallace.) "She complains that somebody is always trying to improve her figure, or her manners, or her morals. But I am under a vow not to meddle with any of them, and for my sake you must take her as she is, and be gracious, Jack. She is quite disposed to like *you*."

"I'm much obliged to her, but I don't think I shall fraternise with her. How long does she remain here?"

Minnie gave him to understand that she was to remain over the wedding. The arrangement did not please him, though he had nothing reasonable to urge against it; it was only natural Minnie should wish to keep her friend with her, and his sudden prejudice rested on such frivolous grounds he was ashamed to mention it. He did not mention it, but, standing with his darling beside him in the moonlight, he forgot all about it for a minute or two, and then went his way home as gaily as he had come; while Minnie, lingering amongst the flowers, felt rejoicingly that the light cloud which had come between them was gone.

Jack Wyvill was not the man to try back on an old doubt without strong provocation when he had once thrust it away from his mind; and the next morning he put a jeweller's case, which he had brought from town, into his pocket, and set off towards Skelton Place again, just at that hour when, according to previous experience, he was most certain of finding Minnie disengaged and alone. He took the same direction as on the night before, but he had not quitted the bounds of his own fields when he was met by his steward, who detained him with prosy business-conversation, and even walked him round half a mile out of his way, to a certain farmstead where improvements and repairs were going on; so that, instead of entering the wood by the gate, he had to climb the fence at another part, and make a short cut through what was called the Lower Copse. The undergrowth

was very thick hereabouts, but at one spot there was a clearing, in the midst of which stood an old pheasant-house, built of boughs and thatched with reeds, which had not been used for a year or two, and was fast falling into unsightly ruin. The place, altogether, was lonely and unattractive, without sunshine and without flowers, and Jack Wyvill was, therefore, no little surprised when from the distance he saw Minnie Conyers and her friend just vanishing within the hut.

They did not perceive him, and for a moment he halted, too much startled to analyse his emotions; but even while he halted, he saw Minnie issue forth again, and peer cautiously about, as if watching for some one, or looking out for spies; but her examination was very brief, and she retreated apparently satisfied without discovering her lover, who, between fear, suspicion, and rage, hardly knew what he did. He drew nearer the pheasant-house, however, keeping in the rear of it, until, being within a few yards of the ragged spot, once more that fragrance of a capital cigar, blended with the sweet softness of the May morning, assailed his senses; and, before he had time to rally from the shock of it, he heard Miss Wharton's voice observing, with unctuous deliberation, "There is no better cigar than the Lopez—none!"

So there *was* some one with them in the pheasant-house! It was an appointment, and Minnie was scout! He did not suspect *her*, but he could have strangled Miss Wharton, that his sweet, guileless darling should be tainted even by the knowledge of her clandestine affairs! He would not surprise their secret, whatever it might be, but gave himself a vigorous shake and tramped on, heedless whether he was heard or not; and probably he was heard, and even seen through the gaps of the rotten boughs, for when he gained the open ground, on the edge of the wood, there was Minnie, arm in arm with her friend, sauntering leisurely towards him, and looking as innocent as if nothing wrong had happened since the Flood!

But there was storm in his face that he could not hide, and Minnie's heart sank as she read the unmistakable signs of it. He had always been so good to her, so truly tender and loving, that the reappearance of last night's gloom in this morning's sudden displeasure frightened her, she hardly knew why. She dreaded explanations and scenes at all times; there was a large measure of feminine unreasonableness and cowardice in her composition; and instead of making an opportunity for him to tell her what was on his mind, she detained Miss Wharton as a screen until they met the squire, who carried Jack off to the stables, sorely against his will, to assist at a consultation over the four-year-old, which was expected to do such wonderful things, and bring such glory to the Skelton stud at the next York Meeting. But Jack was not his own man at all, and he only earned himself the trainer's contempt by his vague remarks, while he considerably lowered the squire's jubilation.

He was experiencing a feeling of intense mortification that Minnie, who had hitherto never sought to dissemble her simple pleasure in his society, should now, within a few days of their marriage, positively avoid him. "I'm not a clever fellow, I know I'm not," thought he, humbly, "but I'll be shot if that friend of hers, who is so wise and witty, and desperately sly, shall come between us, making mischief!" And thus thinking, he answered the squire twice or thrice at cross-purposes, until the impetuous old gentleman asked what the devil ailed him that he was so short. "Had Minnie and he got wrong?"

"No, we have not got wrong, but there is no telling what we may do if that Miss Wharton is for ever in the way," replied Jack, blurting out his wrath in one angry gust. "I don't like her for Minnie's friend, and I'll be hanged if I'll have her at Heathside as my wife's friend!" The squire reddened; he saw the young man's blood was up, and his own warmed too; he felt that Jack meant what he said, and that he had, or believed himself to have, excellent grounds for it; but for a few days past there had been some indistinct sentiments hovering sheepishly about the old gentleman's fancy that made this fiery speech anything but easy or pleasant to digest. He stammered something about Miss Wharton's being his guest, and then went on to say, in a tone of almost eager defence:

"She is a good fellow is Harry Wharton, Jack; not *sweetly feminine* and that sort of thing, but a downright good fellow, and a bit of capital company! I'll tell you what—if she had been old Ralph's son, instead of that ne'er-do-weel of a Tom, she would have set the estate on its legs again. Such a headpiece as hers is lost on a woman's shoulders. Hang it, Jack, what have you got to say against her? Lady Wallace didn't like her once, but even she is coming round; and I call Mary one of the most prejudiced women alive."

Jack Wyvill did not consider that he had any right to mention such suspicions as rose merely out of cigar-smoke; if Miss Wharton had her secrets, she might keep them for him; but Minnie's quiet heart and conscience should not be marred and sullied by being made the confidential keeper of them; he, therefore, simply reiterated, in a dogged manner, what he had said before; and then abruptly changed the subject. The squire felt huffed for a moment; but, after an inarticulate growl or two, he followed the irritated lover's lead, and the hazardous topic of difference was abandoned. Soon after they parted company by mutual consent; the squire went to look after his woodmen felling timber, and Jack turned his steps towards the house, where he sat for nearly an hour, waiting and hoping for Minnie's appearance. Lady Wallace, who was detained from writing her daily dues of letters to entertain him, very naturally wished him away, and at last she proposed sending a messenger in quest of Minnie—a hint to depart which he could not but accept.

"We shall see you at dinner this evening, of course?" added she, with a little kindly compunction, as he was on the point of going. He

said, "Yes; he supposed so," and then reluctantly took himself off; the lovely pearls that he had brought from town to present to his Minnie, reposing forgotten in their case in the depths of his pocket.

Meanwhile Minnie and her friend were again lounging lazily about the Lower Copse, whither they had retired when the squire carried off Jack to the stables. Miss Wharton was in a mood of serene satisfaction and enjoyment, but Minnie was miserably uneasy. She had not her companion's resources for making herself apathetically comfortable under adverse circumstances; and she was afraid lest, having avoided Jack, he should return the compliment, and leave without seeing her again. This dread seized on her so strongly by-and-by, that she said, "Do you mind going in-doors now, Harry?" She had a hope that she might yet be in time to intercept him, by taking the path through the upper wood to the house; but she did not like to say so precisely, even to her familiar friend.

"I don't mind going in-doors if you are tired, though it is pleasanter here. I *should* like one more turn round by the pheasant-house, if you are not in a fuss. What have you to do?" said Miss Wharton, indifferently.

Minnie was in the habit of yielding to her caprices, and she replied now that she had nothing particular to do; so the one turn more round by the pheasant-house resulted in a dozen turns, and when the servants' dinner-bell rang, at one o'clock, they were still in the copse, and Jack Wyvill was plodding his weary way home, unenlivened by any thoughts but angry thoughts against Minnie's friend, to whose evil influence he attributed his darling's incomprehensible behaviour. Until Miss Wharton appeared on the scene there had never been word, or look, or fancy to sow a doubt between them, and now he felt that they were balancing dangerously on the brink of a serious misunderstanding. But it should not come to a quarrel if it lay in his power to hinder it. He would stand on no foolish ceremony; he would have it out with Minnie that night, let what would come of the explanation; and in this wise, firm, substantial resolve he set off to Skelton Place in the evening, arriving only just in time to give her his arm in to dinner. She looked shyly bright, and happily penitent when he met her with his natural air and manner, but this was no time for any but general chat, and the difficult moment was of necessity delayed.

Mr. Warren, Squire Conyers's lawyer, made a sixth at table that day, and in his company Jack Wyvill left the old gentleman, after a couple of glasses of wine, to seek the society of the ladies in the drawing-room. But when he presented himself, he found Lady Wallace alone; and she told him, sleepily, that the young people had availed themselves of the pleasant half-hour that remained before sunset to take a stroll on the terrace, where he had better join them. He waited for no second hint, but immediately snatched his wide-awake from the stand in the hall, and, leaving the house by the principal entrance, directed his steps towards the raised walk on the south front, where he expected to find Miss Wharton and Minnie, debating in his own mind by what ingenious devices he should get his darling to himself, and banish her obnoxious friend.

When Jack Wyvill stepped out upon the terrace, it was deserted. The vases of scarlet geraniums stood along it at equal distances from end to end, but nothing more interesting was visible. He walked down into the flower-garden and through the rosery, but nobody was there. Thence he climbed to the Wilderness, a hilly ornamental shrubbery of several acres in the rear of the house, where he paced to and fro for ever so long, whistling a familiar air, not as a signal exactly, but that if Minnie were here she might be made aware he was here too, and seeking her. By this time the sun had disappeared, and twilight was creeping on. He returned to the terrace, pausing to look in at the conservatory as he passed; but they had not hidden themselves there. They were not in the house, nor about the house, nor, as far as eye could see, were they wandering in the glades of the park; they must, therefore, have betaken themselves to the wood or to the copse again!

Jack felt almost sick with vexation and impatience. It was clear to him that Miss Wharton had private affairs, and that Minnie lent herself to the furtherance of them. He was not inclined to play the spy on Miss Wharton, but he was strongly disposed to act watch-dog to his Minnie, and the difficulty of separating the one proceeding from the other was very embarrassing. After a brief term of consideration, he judged it expedient to await the reappearance of the missing pair, and returned to Lady Wallace in the drawing-room.

"Have you not found them?" asked she, surprised to see him come back so quickly. He replied that they were not anywhere in the gardens or pleasure-grounds through which he had walked. "Miss Wharton is fond of wandering further afield than I like; I must remind Minnie not to leave the terrace of an evening," added her Aunt Mary. She perceived that Jack was displeased, and allowed to herself that he had some cause to show why; but, with the native kindliness of her disposition, she endeavoured to make a little light conversation to divert his mind from brooding on it, and, probably, magnifying it. She did not meet with the success she deserved; Jack grew more and more restless and disquieted every minute of Minnie's absence, and at length, unable to bear it in patience any longer, he strayed into the conservatory, and marched to and fro, watching and waiting in a mood of gathering wrath.

Presently the squire and Mr. Warren entered the drawing-room, when the squire immediately asked, "Where are the girls and Wyvill—in the garden?" Lady Wallace's calm reply was grounded upon Jack's information, and, after hearing it, the old gentleman came into the conservatory, and with a good-humoured wag of his

head at the aggrieved lover, opened the glass door and looked up and down the terrace. "You are a good seeker but a bad finder, Jack; they are not in sight, therefore they must be in the Wilderness," said he.

"Or in the wood or the Lower Copse," responded Jack, shortly.

"In the wood or the Lower Copse! What should they do there at dusk, or what should they do in the Lower Copse at all?" The squire was evidently annoyed at the suggestion; he looked out on the terrace again, and then went back into the drawing-room and rang the bell. The ancient butler answered it. "Bring tea, and send Joliffe to seek the young ladies. Most likely they are in the gardens or the Wilderness," said his master.

Jack heard the order and the directions, but he did not interfere. The servant said, "Yes, sir," with perfect respect of tone and composure of feature, but as soon as he was on the other side of the drawing-room door his expression changed, and he muttered sarcastically to himself, "She's a queer sort of young woman is that Miss Wharton. I'll go and seek 'em myself; I'll not send Joliffe. He has a tongue as long as to-day and to-morrow, and would be for telling if he found out her goings on. I wonder, for my part, how Miss Minnie can abide her." And the butler, who had known Squire Conyers's daughter ever since she was born, and esteemed her the best and kindest as well as the most beautiful of young ladies, went stealthily out at the front door, and, as Jack Wyvill, watching from the conservatory, saw, struck across the lawn and the park in a direct line towards the Lower Copse. Whatever Miss Wharton's clandestine affairs, they were already evidently known in the servants' hall.

Jack sat down in a mood of intense disgust and mortification. How long he sat he never knew, but it seemed hours before he heard swift footsteps passing along the gravelled walk, and then Miss Wharton saying, with suppressed vehemence, "If you tell him, Minnie, I'll never forgive you? What is it to him? *My* business is not *your* business. You are not half so kind to me as you were once." To which Minnie replied in as pettish a tone as she could assume: "I am not going to tell him; you need not be afraid; but I will not steal off to the Copse any more when Aunt Mary believes we are in the garden. You can go alone if you like, but I hate hide-and-seek work; and I don't know what Bolton must think."

"That wooden-faced old butler? Oh, he will not be so impertinent as to think at all," replied Miss Wharton; and with these words she ran up the steps, Minnie following close behind, and so they entered the conservatory. They seemed to espy Jack Wyvill simultaneously, and Minnie's blush was painful; even Miss Wharton did not quite succeed in keeping her countenance, but she dissembled her confusion to the best of her power, and observed that it was much pleasanter out in the open air than in this atmosphere loaded with the heavy perfumes of green-house plants. Jack's response was utterly incoherent; he was no match for her coolness. He felt galled to his very soul, and he betrayed it. Minnie stood for a second or two uncertain and wretched; but as he said nothing, and made no effort to detain her, she passed forward to the drawing-room, where she had to encounter the questions and admonitions of her father.

"Look at the timepiece, Minnie; twenty minutes past nine! Where have you been? Did you see Joliffe?" asked he, hastily.

Minnie hesitated, stammered, looked almost frightened; but Miss Wharton came to the rescue, and took the difficulty of judicious reply out of her mouth. She answered with a ready wit and a skilful evasiveness, but while she was in the midst of her inventive exercise, Jack Wyvill followed into the drawing-room with a visage as black as a thunder-cloud, which did not escape the squire's observations. His straightforward shrewdness detected something amiss when his open-hearted Minnie could not give him a plain answer to a plain question, but must stand by and let some one else be her spokeswoman; and at that moment the fluent Miss Wharton revolted him almost as much as she revolted Minnie's lover.

"There is underhand business going on, and I'll not have it: that is what Jack Wyvill has got an inkling of," thought he. But he saw tears in Minnie's eyes, and said no more for the present, though it was an awful staggering shock to him when he drew down her sweet face to his by one of her sunny bright curls, and instead of the flowery perfume which ordinarily scented her golden hair, he detected the odour of smoke—the unmistakable, undeniable fragrance of tobacco!

During tea the squire stood on the rug, his back to the fire, his cup in his hand, and his observations travelling from one face to another of the disunited party. Miss Wharton would suffer no awkward pauses in the conversation, and talked incessantly, Mr. Warren supporting her, until the squire gave Jack Wyvill a hint to accompany him to the library, when she glanced anxiously at Minnie's dolorous countenance, and wondered what was about to happen. The lawyer being now left alone to amuse the ladies, exerted himself to the best of his ability, but Miss Wharton presently retired to take counsel within herself. "I am afraid somebody suspects," thought she, with genuine but well-concealed alarm. "It is a frightful bore to be amongst such orderly, proper people, and there is another week of it to come! I'll write to Tom to-morrow, and order him to recal me; he can say he has the croup or something, and that he wants me to nurse him. I would rather live with poor Tom than live here, strangled with proprieties and conventionalities. Jealous, clod-hopping noodle that Jack Wyvill is; but Minnie is not overburdened with wisdom herself, so they will be equally mated. She is like a scared rabbit—'Oh, Harry this!' 'Oh, Harry that!' as if the very trees had eyes, and the birds of the air could literally carry the matter! The squire is

the best of the bunch, but even he is full of old-fashioned notions. I almost wish I had never come! People are so bigoted; there is Lady Wallace sniffing and snuffing, and peeping and prying, as if there were a fox in the room! No —I'll be off! I thought it would be pleasant, and safe, and easy, to make oneself happy in one's own way here; but Minnie is always in a fidget, and that makes the risk too great. 'So jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle' at Skelton Place!"

While Miss Wharton was working round to this conclusion in the drawing-room, the squire and Jack were holding a private talk in the library, Jack being by no means reluctant to unbosom himself of his wrongs, when he perceived that the squire was smitten with suspicion too. But the subject was scarcely a pleasant one to open, and it was several minutes before either found courage to do more than hover about it. But at last, said the squire, "Jack, all is not going quite smoothly betwixt you and Minnie, and that is awkward, seeing what is impending over next Tuesday. My girl is a good girl, and I am sure she loves you——"

"God bless her, sir, I know she does!" interrupted Jack, eagerly. "I have not a doubt of Minnie, but Miss Wharton is making a tool of her to promote some mysterious affairs of her own, and I'll not stand it. This is the second evening that I have not had a chance of a word with my darling, and this morning she fairly ran away from me under her friend's wing. I want to know what it all means, this lurking about after dark, and in that dreary Lower Copse where I saw them this morning. If Miss Wharton has a lover under the rose, I'll not let her use my innocent Minnie for a fence. You must speak about it, squire, or I shall."

"You think there is a lover in the case, do you? and I have my reasons for thinking so, too; though why Miss Wharton should make a secret of it, unless it be from a woman's taste for romantic mysteries, I am at a loss to conjecture. If she chose to marry my rough-rider or her brother's groom, Tom is not the man to object—and I'm sure I'm not. My duties as her guardian ended three years since, but she had taken the reins of government into her hands long before that. I do not like to address her, but I'll have in Minnie—perhaps you had better leave us for five minutes, Jack. Go into the conservatory, and when I have had my say I will send her to you."

There was a second entrance into the greenhouse through the library, and by this door Jack Wyvill vanished as Minnie came slowly and shyly, summoned by Bolton, to her father's presence. The tender-hearted lover hoped and prayed the squire would deal gently with his darling, as he hurried out of sight amongst the flowers; but he had a very short interval allowed him either to think or to wish; for not a minute had elapsed since his retirement when Minnie rushed out to seek him, her cheeks a-blaze, her sweet eyes glistening through thick tears. Her father had addressed her with some little sarcasm, which she had taken in earnest, and instead of staying to answer him she carried her defence to head-quarters at once, indignantly sobbing out reproaches to Jack that he could imagine she went with her friend to meet anybody in the wood!

It was impossible to resist the candour of those pleading eyes, and it was equally impossible to resist the temptation of taking his darling's bonny face between his two hands, as he said, "If you met nobody in the wood, then, have you taken to *smoking!*"

Minnie's eyes cleared, and she broke into a merry laugh; "Oh! it is *Harry's cigars,*" whispered she.

"*Harry's cigars, indeed!*" stammered Jack. "Why does she not put on the——hang it, Minnie, they might have lost you a husband, and me the dearest little sweetheart in Christendom!"

"Don't be a goose, Jack—let me go!" responded Minnie; and at that moment Miss Wharton appeared coming towards them from the further end of the conservatory.

"It is moonlight on the terrace; let us go and smoke a cigar, my friend," said Jack, addressing her, while the squire looked out from the library door all a-grin and delighted.

Miss Wharton crimsoned. "It is too bad, Minnie; you promised you would not tell," began she; but Minnie interrupted her with lively defiance.

"I won't be scolded, Harry; your horrid, selfish cigars have nearly made Jack quarrel with me," exclaimed she; "but, now that he knows, you can enjoy your little pleasures in peace and in public! There is nothing wicked in smoking a cigar——"

But Minnie had said enough, and more than enough. Miss Wharton had turned away in high dudgeon, and disappeared for the rest of the evening, and the next day, in spite of entreaties and almost of tears, she went away home. The day after Minnie's wedding she received, not cards or bride-cake, but a box of Lopez cigars.

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BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER V. THE BUNNYCASTLES IN COUNCIL.

THE back parlour at Rhododendron House, dedicated to the nocturnal meal spoken of in the preceding chapter, was a very moderately-sized apartment. Indeed, if an observer of its dimensions had hazarded an opinion that there wasn't room to swing a cat in it, the remark, although coarse (and, as such, naturally intolerable in an establishment so genteel as Rhododendron House), would not have fallen very far short of the truth. This is intended to be a candid history; so I will at once confess that the back parlour was—well, what shall I say?—poky. A pair of folding-doors took up very nearly one of its sides, and these gave admittance to the front parlour, or drawing-room, or state saloon, which was furnished in a style of classic but frigid splendour, and where parents, guardians, and other visitors, to whom the Bunnycastles desired to show ceremonial honour, were received. No pupil dared to enter that sacred apartment without permission. Many, indeed, never saw it from the day when they arrived at school, and were regaled with the sacrificial cake and wine (both of British manufacture), to the day when their friends came to fetch them away. Even the Bunnycastles were chary about intruding on their Sala Regia, save on festive or solemn occasions. The back parlour was essentially their keeping and sitting chamber—their bower and their home.

The late Mr. Bunnycastle's portrait hung on one side of the modest pier-glass on the mantel, and an effigy—a very vile one—in crayons, of Mrs. Bunnycastle, flanked it. Opposite, was a small cottage piano; and you will see, by-and-by, that Rhododendron House was famous for its specimens of modern improvements on the harpsichord and the spinet. The window-curtains were of a dull decorous moreen; the carpets of a faded crimson. The table had a cloth in imitation needlework, like a schoolgirl's sampler of unwonted size taken out of its frame. The chairs were of well-worn green leather. In a recess were three handsome mahogany desks and three rosewood workboxes, respectively pertaining to the three sisters Bunnycastle. Mrs. B.'s great black leather writing-case, where she kept her school register, and her account-books, and her valuables, had an occasional table to itself; and when I have added to the pictorial embellishments of the room, an agreeable although somewhat faded engraving of Pharaoh's Daughter finding the Infant Moses in the Bullrushes, and when I have remarked that on each side of the window hung a cage containing a canary, both of which were unceasingly watched by a grey cat of sly and jesuitical mien, I may be absolved from further performance of my favourite but unpopular part of the broker's man.

It was the same summer evening—the evening of the day of the flower-show at Chiswick, and of Griffin Blunt's rendezvous with the plasterer's wife at the sign of the Goat. The hour was half-past nine, and the Bunnycastles were sitting down to supper. Pepper, the maid, a demure person far gone into spinsterhood, attended upon them. The Miss Bunnycastles had a decided objection to "bits of girls," as they were accustomed to call all female domestics under five-and-twenty. Every servant at Rhododendron House was expected to be thirty years of age, or to wear caps and a countenance corresponding to that period in life. Pepper's christian name happened to be Marian; but she was rigidly addressed as "Pepper," and every servant in the house went by her surname. It averted the possibility of familiarity on the part of the young ladies.

The supper was not a very sumptuous repast. It never was. Frugality, as well as early rising and timeous retiring, formed the rule at Rhododendron House; and the Miss Bunnycastles were small eaters. There was the remnant of a leg of mutton, cold, grinning in a very ghastly manner after its ordeal on the operating table at the one o'clock dinner. It was brought up more for ornament than for use, and unless some friend dropped in—a very small and select circle of acquaintances were so permitted to pay visits at supper-time—it was rarely subjected to the renewed action of the knife. Miss Adelaide Bunnycastle supped on a small basin of arrow-root. Miss Celia seldom partook of any refreshment more nourishing than a minute parallelogram of stale bread, and a diminutive cube of cheese, with, perhaps, a slip or two of pickled cabbage; and Miss Barbara habitually contented herself with a slice of bread-and-butter. Yet all of them would have submitted to the severest of

sacrifices rather than go without that which they imaginatively styled their "supper." Only with Mrs. Bunnycastle did the meal assume the aspect of substantiality, and not of an airy and fanciful myth. She really supped. A nice bit of rumpsteak, or a boiled collop, or an egg and a slice of ham, or a mutton-chop; something warm, and meaty, and comfortable, in fact, was always prepared for her.

The beverage in which, and in the strictest moderation, the Miss Bunnycastles indulged during their unpretending banquet, was the no more aristocratic one than table-ale of the very smallest brewing. There could scarcely have been malt enough, in a whole cask of it, to have given a headache to the rat that ate the malt that lay in the House that Jack built. The ladies took two or three sips of the mawkish infusion of gyle and hops, which had been more frightened than fermented by the yeast, and the ceremonial supper beer was over. But Mrs. Bunnycastle was nightly provided a pint of the very best bottled stout. Nor—my protest of candour being duly allowed—shall I be taking an unwarrantable liberty, I infer, in hinting that after supper the good old lady was accustomed to refect herself with a tumbler three parts full of a curious and generously smelling mixture, of which the component parts appeared to be hot water, lemon-peel, sugar, and juniper.

On this particular flower-show evening, the Bunnycastle meal was of an extraordinary festive character, and the conversation of an unusually animated nature. Not that there was anything more to eat than usual, but there was a guest. The Midsummer holidays were just over, nearly all the pupils had returned, and some new pupils (all of them to learn extras) had arrived. Hence one reason for jubilation. Then, the quarterly bills had been paid by the majority of the parents and guardians, and with not more grumbling or reductions than usual. Another cause for joyfulness. Finally, Mr. Drax, the apothecary, had looked in to supper, and the Bunnycastles were all very glad to see him.

Mr. Drax was the very discreetest of apothecaries to be found in College-street, Clapham, in the county of Surrey, or anywhere else you like to name. The first evidence of his discretion was in his keeping, by word and deed, his age a profound secret. He was the oldest looking young man, or the youngest looking old man in the medical profession, or, for the matter of that, out of it. You might have fancied Drax to be just over sixteen, or just on the verge of sixty. I am not exaggerating. How are you to judge of a man's age, when upon his face not a vestige of hirsute adornment is to be seen—when his cheeks are as round and as smooth as apples (apples in wax, before the colouring matter is applied: for Mr. Drax was pale)—when he wears spectacles, and a wig, and a white tie? He had lost all his hair, he said, through a fever in his early youth, and was thus compelled to adopt an artificial coiffure. When occurred the period of that early youth? Two years ago? Or half a century ago? I must answer, with Montaigne, "que sçais-je?" and the inquisitive ladies of Clapham, although their acquaintance with the works of the quaint old essayist may have been but slender, were constrained to give a similar reply to the oft-posed question. There were no actual wrinkles on the Draxian countenance, and the slight puckerings under his eyes and about his mouth might have been the result of arduous study of his art; for, although I have hastily dubbed him apothecary, Parfitt Drax had passed both Hall and College, and was a general practitioner. He wore spectacles, he said, because he was short-sighted; but nobody knew whether his imperfect vision was inborn, or had grown upon him with years. He was too discreet to tell you. If he were, indeed, a profound dissembler and young, his spectacles, his wig, and his white tie, relieved him from that appearance of juvenility which, in discreet boarding-schools, at Clapham and elsewhere, would have been a reproach and a stumbling-block to him. If he were old, his make-up was perfect, and he, or his wig-maker, or his tailor, had triumphed over Time, who ordinarily triumphs over all. The accomplished Madame Rachel, and her more accomplished daughter, with all their Arabian, Indo-Syriac, and Mesopotamian enamels and varnishes, could not have made Drax look more "beautiful for ever" than he looked of himself under the influence of imperturbable discretion, scrupulous cleanliness, a neckerchief of white cambric, a pair of glasses, and a false head of hair. This head, this wig, was in itself an achievement. It was discreet, like its possessor. It showed no tell-tale parting. It was rigid with no unnaturally crisp curls. It was a waving, flowing, reasonably tumbled, human-looking scalp covering, of a discreet mouse colour, that might have begun to turn grey the next moment, or have preserved its natural hue until Drax was gathered to his fathers. It was a wig for any age, or for no age at all.

Drax, I say, wore a white tie; a strictly medical neckband, a consulting neckcloth, a family cravat—symmetrical without being formal—dégagé without being careless—tied in a little square bow. Drax wore very large and stiff wristbands, in hue and consistence belonging to the glacial period. They added to his discreet appearance. His right middle finger was adorned with a mourning ring containing a lady's hair, and an indecipherable monogram. The hair was of an ambiguous shade. It might have been that of his deceased wife, or of his sister, or of his sweetheart, or of his grandmother. It formed an additional piece of artillery in his discretional battery.

Mr. Drax was a frequent visitor at the school, not only in his professional capacity, but as a friend of the family. He was allowed to come as often as he liked, and to supper uninvited. In fact, he "dropped in." But on this particular evening his presence at the usual repast was not due to the immediate exercise of his own personal volition. The Bunnycastles had agreed,

early in the afternoon, that Mr. Drax should be invited to supper, and in pursuance of the resolution unanimously arrived at in solemn family council, Miss Barbara Bunnycastle had, in her own exquisite (though somewhat attenuated) Italian hand, written to him, "Dear Mr. Drax, *pray* come to supper, as *soon* after nine as ever you *possibly* can. We want so *very* much to *see* you, and *consult* with you on a most *particular* and *important* matter." The original underscorings are Miss Barbara Bunnycastle's, and not mine.

This missive, signed with the initials B. B., and "your *ever* faithfully," and sealed with Barbara's own signet, bearing the charming enough little motto of "Dinna forget," was duly despatched at tea-time by the page and knife-boy (the only male creature, with the exception of the gardener, who came once a week for four hours, forming part of the Rhododendronian retinue) to Mr. Drax's surgery or shop in College-street; and punctually at half-past nine, the discreet apothecary made his appearance in the little back parlour. He had as small an appetite—or, in his discretion, chose to be as abstemious—as the Bunnycastles themselves; and so, after he had consumed a very thin slice of the grinning mutton, and sipped a very small quantity of the table-ale, Miss Adelaide Bunnycastle mixed him, with her own fair hands (never mind if they were slightly bony), a tumbler full of the warm, colourless, but comforting mixture which her mamma was in the habit of imbibing after supper. Then the conversation, which had hitherto been fitful and desultory, became concentrated and engrossing.

"Did you ever hear of such a strange romantic affair?" asked Miss Adelaide.

"Only fancy," Miss Celia continued, "no name given—at least, no real one—no address, no references, but an offer of fifty guineas a year, payable in advance, for a little girl not yet four years of age."

"And such a beautiful spoken gentleman is the dark one," remarked Barbara.

"And so beautifully spoken is the one with the bald head," interposed Adelaide.

"Rubbish, girls," quoth good Mrs. Bunnycastle. "The bald-headed one isn't a gentleman at all. He's the dark one's man-servant."

"He has lovely eyes," pleaded Barbara, "and charming teeth, and an angel smile."

"He wears a diamond ring as big as a fourpenny-piece," said the practical Adelaide.

"I tell you he's nothing but the other one's valet. He as much as owned it to me, the last time he was here. But, master or man, it doesn't much matter. Do tell us now, my dear doctor, whether we ought to take this little girl or not?"

All Mr. Drax's discretion was required to enable him to give this interrogation a fitting reply. He stroked his chin with his hands, and crossed the foot of one leg over the knee of the other, his favourite attitude when in profound meditation. Then he softly swayed his discreet head upward and downward, as though he were weighing the pros and cons of the momentous question. The Bunnycastles regarded him with anxious interest. They had unlimited confidence in his discretion. At last the wise man spake.

"Your usual sums, my dear Mrs. Bunnycastle, are——"

"We say forty, and take thirty, or whatever we can get," the lady superior responded, with a sigh. "Miss Furblow, it is true, pays fifty; but then she's a parlour-boarder, and her father a purse-proud tradesman, with more money than wit."

"Parents are growing stingier and stingier every day," added Adelaide. "They think washing costs nothing, and they won't even pay for a seat at church, or for stationery. That's why we've adopted the viva voce system of instruction, and so saved half the copybooks."

"They have the impudence to come and tell us that there are schools advertised, with unlimited diet, twenty-seven acres of ground, a carriage kept, lectures by university professors, weekly examinations by a clergyman, a drill-sergeant to teach calisthenics, milk from the cow, and all the accomplishments, including the harmonium and the Indian sceptre, for sixteen pounds a year. And no vacations, and the quarter to commence from the day of entrance!"

"I wonder what they feed the children upon?" quotes Miss Barbara, disdainfully: "snips and snails, and puppy-dogs' tails, I should imagine."

"I thank Heaven *we* have never advertised," remarked, with proper pride, Mrs. Bunnycastle. "*That* degradation has at least been spared the principals of Rhododendron House."

"Which always will continue to be exempt from such a humiliation," Mr. Drax put in, with a decided bow. "Advertising has been overdone, even in the case of patent medicines."

The discreet Drax had committed one indiscretion in the course of his professional career. He had dreamed of a Pill which should eclipse the renown of all other pills, which should be vended by millions of boxes at one shilling and a penny-halfpenny each (government stamp included), and which should realise a rapid and splendid future for himself. Drax's Antiseptic, Antizymotic, Antivascular Herbal Pills were launched, but did not attain success. Either they were not advertised enough, or they were puffed through wrong channels. The pills were a sore point with Drax; and his cellar was full of them. I hope the constitution of the rats benefited by their consumption, and that the old women supplied with the pills at Mr. Drax's gratuitous consultations were likewise the better for them.

"Well, doctor, what do you say?" Miss Adelaide continued.

"Your terms are forty, and you take thirty, making even a further reduction when vacancies are numerous, and an increase in numbers is desirable. You had rather a bad time last quarter but one, when, scarlet fever having broken out, of thirty-eight pupils who were sent home to

escape infection, only twenty-nine returned to resume their studies."

"And then, you know, Mr. Legg, the coal merchant, who had four daughters here with the smallest heads and the largest appetites it is possible to conceive, had the wickedness and dishonesty to go bankrupt, and we never got a penny for two quarters' schooling of the whole four."

"Rent and taxes are heavy; risks are numerous; parents are, as you remark with pardonable severity, stingy; provisions are dear"—thus went on, discreetly pondering aloud, Mr. Drax—"and the fifty guineas are to be paid by half-yearly payments, in advance. Well, dear ladies, I think, if I were you, I should take the little girl."

"So young a child can't eat much," mused Miss Adelaide.

"She won't want any accomplishments yet awhile, and when she does we must ask higher terms."

"And her papa is evidently a gentleman," Miss Barbara added.

"To say nothing of the man-servant with the diamond ring," interposed Adelaide, somewhat maliciously.

"With one so young," wound up Mrs. Bunnycastle, with soft didacticism, "on a mind so tender and so plastic, who shall say what durable and valuable impressions may not be made? How many children are treated with harshness and want of consideration; how many have been set down as dunces and idlers, because their natures have not been understood; because their capacities have not been discriminatingly ascertained; because their susceptibilities have not been worked upon; because the responsive chords in their characters have not been touched by the judicious fingers of kindness and sympathy——"

"There, ma, that will do," Miss Adelaide broke in, with a shake of sadness in her voice; "we're talking business, and don't want extracts from the prospectus at supper-time. The principal stumbling-block to me, dear doctor, is the absence of references. We are, you know, so very exclusive."

Exclusiveness at Rhododendron House meant this—and it has pretty nearly the same signification at five hundred boarding-schools—the Bunnycastles had a decided objection to taking any pupils unless they were perfectly certain of punctuality in the receipt of quarterly payments from their relatives or friends.

"Admitting that the want of satisfactory references is a serious impediment," remarked Mr. Drax, with his discreetest smile, "is it an insuperable one?"

"It may have been a love-match," suggested Adelaide.

"Or a scion of nobility," added Celia.

"Or one against whom great machinations have been formed," said Barbara.

"Stuff and nonsense!" exclaimed Mrs. Bunnycastle, with an energy unusual to one of her soft and sentimental nature. "When you've kept a school as long as I have, girls, you'll know that there are, as the doctor says, hundreds of reasons for putting a little bit of a child away, and leaving her under proper care till she's grown up. I think we're all agreed? The little one is to be taken?"

"Certainly," chorused the three maidens.

"You could not have arrived at a more sagacious decision," acquiesced Mr. Drax.

"But the most embarrassing thing of all is," Miss Adelaide resumed, "that she is to be brought here this very night. We expect her papa every minute. The gentleman with the diamond ring—the man-servant, I mean—said they might be as late as half-past ten. Only fancy a visit, at so late an hour, and from a stranger too, at Rhododendron House! Such a thing has never happened to us since we first came here. And it was principally for that reason, doctor, that we asked you to come. We wished, in case you advised us to take this little thing, to have you here, as a kind of witness, as it were, when her papa brought her."

"Perhaps her papa will object," remarked Barbara.

"To what? To something he can't see any more than the man in the moon can?" retorted her sister, snappishly. "Nothing would be likelier than his objection to a stranger being present if his object is to secure secresy; but, at the same time, nothing is easier than to avoid the slightest unpleasantness."

"Of course, of course," said the discreet apothecary. "I apprehend your meaning in a moment, my dear young lady. You wish me to be a witness, but an invisible one. You must receive the visitors in the front drawing-room. If you will kindly have the lamp lighted there, and leave me here in darkness (and, he might have added, 'in discretion'), with one of the folding-doors the slightest degree in the world on the jar, I shall be an auditor to all that passes, and you may depend on my adroitness to see as well as hear."

Miss Adelaide Bunnycastle clapped her hands in grave applause at the apothecary's suggestion. Celia regarded him with eyes of favour. Barbara smiled upon him. Old Mrs. Bunnycastle was just on the point of asking him if he would take just one little drop more of spirits-and-water (although I am certain that Drax, in his discretion, would have refused), when the gate bell was rung, and, a moment afterwards, the sound of carriage-wheels was heard crunching the gravel-walk before Rhododendron House. The ladies hurried into the drawing-room. A solemn lamp with a green shade round it was hastily illumined; and presently Pepper announced that two gentlemen, with a little child, requested an interview with Mrs. and the Miss Bunnycastles.

CHAPTER VI. LILY SITS UP LATE.

Francis Blunt, Esq., sometimes called Frank, but familiarly known as Griffin, entered the scholastic presence with the assured step of one who felt himself among those ready to do him

homage. He was still exquisitely polite—indeed, courting was second nature to him; but his politeness was the condescension of a sovereign among his subjects—of the Marquis de Carabas among his vassals.

Mr. Blunt had thrown over his attire of the afternoon a long ample cloak of circular cut, deeply faced with velvet, and made of the finest broadcloth. It was called a "Spanish" cloak; and in Spanish I am afraid the eminent Mr. Nugee, the tailor who had made it, was paid. Blunt had long since passed into that state of indebtedness when a man gets credit solely on the strength of his already owing so much.

Close upon his heels, and carrying a slight childish form wrapped up in a cloak, was Mr. Blunt's friend. Yes; he was his friend—his guide and philosopher too, although to the world the relation in which he stood towards the man of fashion was not more exalted than that of a valet de chambre. Mr. Blunt's friend was hero and valet in one, and looked each character equally well.

In his way he was as exquisitely dressed as his master. It is difficult to make anything remarkable out of a full suit of glossy black. You must needs look, in general, either like a waiter, or a doctor, or a schoolmaster, or an undertaker. The friend and valet of Francis Blunt, Esq., did not approach any one of the above-mentioned types of humanity. Mr. Nugee made the coats of the man as well as of the master. The valet's coat was perfection. It wasn't a body-coat, and it wasn't a swallow-tail—nay, nor a frock, nor a surtout, nor a spenser, nor a shooting-jacket. It was a coat with which no one could quarrel. It had the slightest clerical appearance, just tinged with a shade of the sporting cut. There is little need to say anything of the supplementary garments worn by Mr. Blunt's friend. That incomparable coat disarmed all ulterior criticism, and would have compensated for any short-comings in the remainder of the attire. Such short-comings, however, were non-existent. Everything came up to a high standard of excellence. A delicate appreciation of art was shown in the thin brown gaiter with pearl buttons, that showed itself between the termination of the pantaloon and the foot of the varnished boot. A refined spirit of propriety was manifest in the narrow shirt-collar, and the quietly folded scarf of black ribbed silk, fastened with a subdued cameo representing the profile of a Roman emperor. Even that diamond ring to which Miss Bunnycastle had called attention, large and evidently valuable as it was, had nothing about it on which the imputation of obtrusiveness or vainglory could be fixed. It was worn on the little finger of the left hand, and rarely brought into play.

It is time to say a few words about the individual for whom a skilful tailor and his own delicacy of taste had done so much. Nature had been partially kind, but, with her usual caprice, here and there hostile, to the individual. He was of the middle size, and clean limbed, but all the powers of the coat were needed—and they nearly but not entirely succeeded—in disguising the fact that he was so round-shouldered as to be almost humpbacked. Without the coat, he would have been Quasimodo; with the coat, he was only a gentleman who, unfortunately, stooped a good deal. His head was large, but the collar of that invaluable coat was so cut as to make his neck sit well on his torso. His hair was of the deepest raven black—blue in the reflexions indeed—and, had it had its own way, would have grown in wildly tufted luxuriance. But from nape to temples his locks had been shorn to inexorable shortness; yet, close as the scissors had gone, you could tell at a glance that a forest had been there.

In the whole attitude of the man there was repose, concealed strength, abnegation of outward show. Had he given his eyes and lips full play, the expression of his countenance would have been terrible. But, with rare self-denial, he kept his eyelids habitually drawn down, and veiled his great, flashing, devouring orbs with the yellow nimbus round each pupil. In the same spirit of abstention from show, his lips, naturally full and pulpy, were under inflexible management, and were kept firmly set together. Not half the world knew what large, regular, white teeth he had. He sometimes smiled, but he never bit, in public. There was one concealment he could not, or had not, cared to make. The very large, bushy black eyebrows were untampered with, and notwithstanding the laboured amenity of his physiognomy, gave him a somewhat forbidding look. Add to this that his complexion was dark, but so far removed from sanguineous hues as to be well-nigh sallow, and that on each cheek he wore a short closely-cropped triangular whisker strongly resembling a mutton-cutlet, and you have him complete.

This individual was Monsieur Constant, valet de chambre and confidential factotum to Francis Blunt, Esq., and speaking English fluently and idiomatically. He knew all that his master did; and there were a great many things within his, the servant's ken, of which the master had not the slightest idea. Monsieur Constant said that he was five-and-thirty years of age, bien sonnés, which means that he might have been between five-and-thirty and forty; and there was no reason for disbelieving his statement. Monsieur Constant came from Switzerland—from one of the cantons bordering upon Italy, I should opine, to judge from his swarthy complexion. I believe his christian name was Jean Baptiste. Of his foreign antecedents he was reticent. His English antecedents could be known to all who were at the pains to inquire. They were enrolled in a long catalogue of distinguished service with the British aristocracy. His character, or rather his characters, were stainless. He had been the Marchioness of Cœurdisart's courier. He had valeted the Duke of Pamposter, and attended on his son and heir, the young Marquis of Truffleton, at Oxford, and throughout the grand tour. He had been for a short time groom of the chambers to Lord

Buffborough, when that nobleman was ambassador at Paris. Griffin Blunt had won him from the diplomatic service, and although he lost promotion, if not caste, by the change, the valet clung with strange tenacity to his new master, in whose service he had now been three years. Master and man alike suited each other. Each, perchance, had his own game to play, and played it with tranquil skill. Mr. Blunt declared that his man Constant was unrivalled. "None of your five-act comedy valets," he would say, "but a steady-going, responsible fellow, who knows his business, and goes about it without boring you. He's a proud fellow enough. Sells my old clothes to a Jew, and has his own coats made by my tailor. Never dresses beyond his station, however. He does me credit; and, egad! I fancy he shares in it, though I dare say he's got much more money than I have." I fancy Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant had.

As for the third person in this group, poor little Lily, the child was placidly slumbering in the folds of the great warm shawl. She had cried herself to sleep in the hackney-coach, and her waking, when the vehicle stopped at Rhododendron House, was but for a moment. Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant laid her gently down in the state arm-chair, with its elaborately worked anti-macassar: slightly to the horror of Miss Celia Bunnycastle, who had never seen a new pupil permitted to occupy that imposing throne of maroon-coloured morocco, and then stood respectfully in the background, a demure smile mantling on his dark face. Adelaide Bunnycastle admitted in the inmost recesses of her heart that the scene was eminently romantic. It was like Lara; it was like the Corsair; it was like Thaddeus of Warsaw.

Meanwhile, Mr. Blunt had allowed his mantle to drop gently from his shoulders, and accepted with his gracefullest bow the seat offered him by Mrs. Bunnycastle, who had reserved the moreen morocco fauteuil for his reception, but had, in stress of upholstery, been fain to fall back on a high-backed chair of walnut wood. He was overwhelming in compliments and apologies for intruding on the ladies at so unseemly an hour; pleaded stress of business, and an imminent departure for foreign parts.

"Ah! he's been abroad, has he?" mused Mr. Drax, in the dark. "The man-servant's a foreigner too. Let's have another look at him." And in his anxiety to obtain a better view, Mr. Drax, slightly derogating from his reputation for discretion, opened one of the doors yet a little and a little more, till it creaked.

Mr. Blunt started. "What the devil is that noise?" he asked, with an abruptness not precisely in unison with the tone of mellifluous suavity he had adopted a moment before.

Mrs. Bunnycastle had no time to be shocked at the irreverence of the stranger's query. She was too much flurried by the creaking of the door, and in a nervous murmur laid the blame of the occurrence on the cat. Mr. Blunt seemed perfectly satisfied when the grave, respectful voice of Monsieur Constant gave a fresh turn to the conversation.

He had politely declined the seat offered him by the youngest Miss Bunnycastle, and remained standing; but now advanced a couple of paces. "Monsieur, whom I have the honour to serve," he said, "has brought the little girl of whom mention has already been made. Monsieur is ready to pay the sum agreed upon, fifty guineas, for one year's board and education, and only requires a little paper of receipt undertaking that no further demand shall be made upon him until a year is past."

"We don't even know the gentleman's name if we made such a demand," Mrs. Bunnycastle remarked, with a smile. "But the young lady must be called by some name or other."

"Certainly, certainly," broke in the dandy. "Call her Floris. I'm Mr. Floris."

"Floris; a very pretty name indeed," said Miss Barbara, writing it down on a sheet of paper. "And her christian name?"

The master looked uneasily at the valet. I think he had forgotten his daughter's name.

"Lily," said Monsieur Constant, thus appealed to.

As he spoke, the child woke up from her sleep, and thinking herself called, answered with a sob that she was "vay tyde." The sound of her voice was a signal to the two younger Miss Bunnycastles to hasten to the arm-chair, to unrol the little one from her shawl, to kiss her, and smooth her hair, and fondle her, and go through the remainder of the etiquette invariably observed at Rhododendron House at the reception of a new pupil of tender age. Not that the Miss Bunnycastles were either hypocritical or ill-natured. They were naturally very fond of children, but they saw so many, and so much of them.

The required paper was duly made out, and signed by Mrs. Bunnycastle; and Monsieur Constant, advancing to the table, respectfully placed a little wash-leather bag, containing fifty-two pounds, ten, in the hands of the schoolmistress. Nothing loth, Mrs. Bunnycastle proceeded to count it; and even the eyes of her two eldest daughters twinkled as the sovereigns gave out their faint "chink, chink." Barbara Bunnycastle was insensible to the gold's seductive sound. Her eyes wandered from the master to the valet, and her soul was filled with wonder and admiration for both. It was like the Cottagers of Glenburnie. It was like the Children of the Abbey. It grew more and more romantic every moment.

"There is only one little thing more," said Mrs. Bunnycastle, rather hesitatingly. "Has—a—has your—has the gentleman (she indicated Monsieur Constant) brought the young lady's boxes?"

"What boxes?" asked the dandy, with a polite stare.

"Her clothes—her linen," explained all the Bunnycastle family with one voice.

Francis Blunt, Esq., looked at them, generally,

in blank discomposure. He turned to Monsieur Constant; but that retainer shrugged his shoulders as though it were beyond his province or his power to interfere.

"Confound it!" cried the dandy. "It's very vexatious; but the fact is, we've forgotten the clothes."

"A nice affectionate father," murmured Mr. Drax, in the dark.

The dilemma was perplexing, but not irremediable. Monsieur Constant explained that Monsieur whom he had the honour to serve, had left Mademoiselle's petit trousseau at his hotel in London. Would the ladies undertake to procure clothes for the child, if a sum were left in advance, sufficient for what she might probably require? Mrs. Bunnycastle bowed her head in gracious approval of this proposal. What sum would be requisite? Oh! merely a few pounds. The valet whispered the master. The latter, looking anything but pleased, but, from a purse elegantly embroidered with beads and gold thread, took out a couple of crisp five-pound notes, which he handed to Mrs. Bunnycastle. Then he rose, suppressing a slight yawn, saying that it was past eleven o'clock, and that he had detained the ladies an unconscionably long time.

All the women's garments rustled—for they had dressed themselves in silk attire, in expectation of his visit—as he made his reverence of farewell. Mrs. Bunnycastle was profuse in her thanks, and protestations of solicitude for Lily's welfare. The young ladies chimed in harmoniously.

"She is to be brought up in the principles of the Church of England?"

"Of course, of course. By all means; eh, Constant?"

Monsieur Constant bowed diplomatically, as though to convey that, professing as he might himself a different creed, he had the profoundest respect for the Church of England, as that of the ladies before him, of Monsieur whom he had the honour to serve, and of the genteel classes generally.

"As her little mind expands," said Mrs. Bunnycastle, "no efforts of ours shall be spared, not only to instil into her piety and virtue, but to lay the foundation of clever ornate accomplishments——"

"Thank you, thank you," Mr. Blunt returned, rather hastily, and cutting short a further instalment of the paraphrased prospectus; "when she's old enough, of course she'll learn French and drawing, and that sort of thing."

"And dancing," suggested the valet, in a low deeply respectful voice.

Mr. Blunt started, as though a wasp had stung him. When he spoke again, there was a strange dry harshness in his voice. "Madam," he said, turning to the schoolmistress with a sternness unwonted in so urbane a gentleman, "I do *not* want my daughter to learn to dance. Mind that, if you please. No dancing for Miss Lily Floris. I have the honour to wish you a very good night."

He was going. He was on the threshold, when Monsieur Constant whispered to him:

"Monsieur has forgotten to bid adieu to la petite."

With his usual charming grace, he imprinted a kiss on Lily's brow. The little one did not heed him. She had fallen asleep again. He turned, bowed, and touched the tips of all the ladies' fingers in succession. He was unrivalled in the art of touching your hand, without shaking it. The women's garments rustled again as they bent in eddying curtseys. Monsieur Constant bestowed a bow on the company, reverential but not servile, as became his degree; and Pepper ushered the two to the door, and they went away.

The first thing the Bunnycastles did when the sound of the hackney-coach wheels had died away, was to bear the lamp and the money into the back parlour, and rejoin the discreet Mr. Drax. Then they proceeded to count the fifty-two sovereigns and a half, all over again. Then they examined the crisp bank-notes, from the medallion of Britannia to the signature of Mr. Henry Hase. Then they turned to the backs of those documents, scanning the much-blotted dorsal scribblings—the worst pens, the worst ink, and the worst pothooks and hangers in the world always seem called into play for the endorsement of bank-notes—and wondered whether "Blogg," who dated from Isleworth, or "Cutchins and Co.," who gave their address in Leather-lane, or "C. J. Gumby," who seemingly resided at Bow, could have anything to do with the mysterious strangers who had just faded away from their ken, leaving a little child, not four years old, a checked woollen shawl, and sixty pounds odd, sterling money of this realm, behind them. They could make nothing of the notes, however, beyond the fact that they were genuine, or of the gold, save that it chinked cheerily, or of either, save that the money looked very nice. Then they drew breath, and interchanged glances of pleasing perplexity.

I think it was Mr. Drax who, with his never-failing discretion, now suggested that it might perhaps be better to put the "new pupil" to bed, as she had come a long way, and must be very tired. Poor little "new pupil!" The Bunnycastles had forgotten all about her. Adelaide acknowledged with a smile that the little body had quite slipped her memory, and, while she rang the bell for Pepper, requested Barbara to fetch the child from the drawing-room.

The child looked up when she was brought into the cozy back parlour, but did not cry. She seemed to be rather relieved by the absence of the two men who had brought her to Rhododendron House. The dandy's resplendent attire and dazzling teeth, and the valet's coat, cameo, and smile, had alike failed in producing a favourable effect on her. On the other hand, while she submitted to be patted on the head by Mrs. Bunnycastle, and severely smiled at by

the three young ladies, she took very kindly to Mr. Drax, and, coming toddling towards him, essayed to climb upon his knees, stretching forward one of her plump little hands as though she desired to touch his discreet and mystic neckcloth.

"Ah!" smiled Mr. Drax, as he lifted her up and imprinted a discreet kiss on her forehead, just at the roots of her hair. "She won't be so very fond of me when she has taken half the nasty things I shall be obliged to give her. Poor little thing! I wonder whether she's had the measles?"

He leaned back in his chair and regarded her in fond anticipation, as though mildly gloating over a subject who was to conduce to the enlargement of his professional experience, and in the increase of his quarterly bills. His reverie was put an end to by the arrival of Pepper, who, like a good-natured woman as she was, had in a few moments stroked Lily's brown curls, kissed her on both cheeks, chucked her under the chin, hoisted her up in her arms, and told her half a merry story about a little girl who was always ready to go to bed, and was, in consequence, much beloved by all the angels.

"This is Miss Floris, Miss Lily Floris, Pepper," Mrs. Bunnycastle remarked, with calm dignity. "Her papa, who is going abroad, was obliged to bring her very late. What beds are there vacant, Pepper?"

"There's number two, in the first room, mum," answered the domestic.

"Among the elder girls," interposed Adelaide; "that would never do. They never go to sleep until daybreak, I do believe, and they'd question her out of her life before breakfast-time. And Mamselle, though it's her duty not to allow them to talk, is just as bad as they are."

"There's five and nine in the second room; but there's no mattress on five; and as for nine, you know, mum——"

"Well, what do we know?" asked Miss Celia, sharply.

"It's the bed Miss Kitty died in," Pepper returned, with an effort.

There was a prejudice in Rhododendron House against sleeping in the bed that Kitty had died in.

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried Mrs. Bunnycastle.

"Well, where *are* we to put her?" Adelaide asked, impatiently. "We can't keep the child up all night."

Lily looked remarkably wide awake, and as though she intended to remain so. She was playing with the ribbons in Pepper's cap, and apparently would not have had the slightest objection to the continuance of that amusement until cockcrow. As for Mr. Drax, his discretion stood him in good stead during this essentially domestic conversation, and he feigned to be immersed in the perusal of a volume of the Missionary Magazine for 1829.

"Well, if you please, mum," Pepper ventured to represent, "I think that as the dear little girl's so young, and so tired, and so strange, I'd better take her to bed with me, mum, and then, to-morrow, you know, mum, you can see about it."

The ladies were graciously pleased to accept this suggestion, and it was agreed to nem. con. And then—it being now fully half-after eleven o'clock—Lily and her new guardian disappeared, and the discreet Mr. Drax took his leave, promising to call in on the morrow afternoon, in case his advice should be needed.

"A very nice girl is Barbara Bunnycastle," said Mr. Drax, softly to himself, as he walked home to College-street. "A very nice girl, and one who would make any man's home happy."

Both Adelaide and Barbara dreamed of Mr. Drax.

"MAKING TEA" IN INDIA.

THE journey from Calcutta to the tea-growing districts of Assam and Cachar, during the dry weather, necessitates a visit to the Soonderbunds—an enormous tract of desolate jungle, stretching from the river Hooghly, on the western side of the Bay of Bengal, to Chittagong, on the east, a distance of upwards of two hundred miles across, and intersected with innumerable narrow streams, the various outlets of the Ganges. This dreary waste of country is the sole and undisputed property of tigers, leopards, and other wild beasts, and is only visited occasionally by a class of natives calling themselves "wood-cutters," who constantly fall victims to these animals.

While steering through these narrow rivulets, herds of deer feeding on the edges of the jungle attracted our attention, the more so as they allowed us to get quite close to them before condescending to take the slightest notice of our steamer. Had we been disposed, we might have shot any number of them, but it being considered unadvisable to stop the course of the vessel, we had sufficient humanity to leave them in peace. We were by no means sorry when we steamed clear of this desolate region, and anchored on the fifth day at Koolneah, the first coaling depôt after leaving Calcutta. The afternoon of the ninth day brought us to Dacca, and here we bade farewell to our steamer, the vessel being ordered to return, and we being instructed to shift for ourselves as we best could until another arrived to take us on to Cachar.

I was not long before I found myself comfortably housed. A letter of introduction in England means a little civility when you deliver your credentials, or, at most, an invitation to dinner, while in India it signifies board, lodging, and every comfort and attention that it is possible to offer. I have reason to speak favourably of Indian hospitality, for I was detained at Dacca upwards of three weeks, and during the whole of that period was entertained by people whom I had never seen before in my life. Much has been written and said concerning the arrogance of Indian officials,

both in their public and private character, but my experience has shown me that no class of men deserve the epithet less. Now that the country is being opened up by railways in every direction, and travelling has become no longer a matter of danger and difficulty, all classes, official and non-official, are compelled to be more cautious concerning whom they invite to take up a residence in their homes; for many cases have occurred of late years, of hospitality having been abused by adventurers, and unlucky hosts sorely victimised.

When the steamer arrived that was to convey us to Cachar, we were by no means pleased to find that she had in tow two large barges, termed "flats," loaded with several hundred Coolies for the tea plantations.

The horrors of a slave ship are familiar enough, and in attempting to describe the position of the poor wretches who were crowded into these barges—men, women, and children indiscriminately—without regard to sex or age, I shall put forward no statement that cannot be substantiated. Soon after we left Dacca, cholera broke out amongst these miserable creatures, and in less than three days we consigned several bodies to the river. It will, perhaps, be as well if I take the reader back to Calcutta, for the purpose of showing how the system of Coolie emigration to the tea districts of Assam and Cachar was carried on only twelve months ago.

The enormous demand for labour in those provinces necessitated the establishment in Calcutta of private emigration agents; and men, women, and children, were contracted for like cattle, at so much per head, the contractors receiving from the tea-planters a certain sum for every individual landed on their plantations, as well as for those who died on the passage. The result of this human traffic was, as might have been expected, an amount of dishonesty and cruelty as disgraceful and repugnant as the African slave trade itself. It was of little consequence to the contractors how many died during the three weeks' passage to Cachar or Assam, since they received so much per head for all those that quitted Calcutta. The result was, that old men and women, whose lives might be reckoned in days, and even hours, the lame, the halt, the blind, and the diseased, were crammed pell-mell into these barges, to infect men, women, and children who, when they left Calcutta, were in the enjoyment of robust health. Previous to embarkation they were collected at certain depôts, where, to use the language of a government official well known and respected throughout India, and who has lately published an interesting work on the cultivation of tea, "these unfortunate creatures were located in places, the pestilential vapours of which, generated by the ordure and filth with which they were filled, were *deadly* to human life. Many contracted the germs of distemper and disease, and in this state were placed in gangs on board boats to be sent to their final destination. Here, crowded and huddled together, and compelled to live in a state of uncleanness revolting to human nature, as might be expected cholera and other malignant diseases broke out with fearful effect. In some instances, *ten* per cent of these wretched victims were carried off in as many days. In others, the mortality reached to forty or fifty per cent in a three weeks' voyage."

That there is not the slightest tinge of exaggeration in this description I am confident, for I have by me notes taken during our journey from Dacca to Cachar on board the Thomas Brassey—a voyage which lasted only ten days—and I find not only numerous deaths recorded amongst the Coolies from cholera and other diseases, but also the fact mentioned, that "among the number are several suffering from elephantiasis, three totally blind, others unable to walk except with the aid of crutches, and one who has had his right hand amputated—a valuable addition, certainly, to a tea plantation." It will naturally be asked what becomes of these useless creatures? The reply is, that they are turned adrift to shift for themselves as best they can.

When we landed at Cachar, a dispute arose between some of the planters to whom the Coolies were consigned and the captain of the Thomas Brassey; the planters contending that they had received no advice concerning such a large batch, and refusing to take overcharge of more than the number they supposed themselves entitled to; the captain of the steamer insisting that every man, woman, and child should leave his vessel at once, as he had performed the contract he had undertaken of bringing them to Cachar, and that he would not furnish a meal for them after the anchor had dropped. They were all accordingly landed on the banks of the river. When we left Cachar, a few days afterwards, many of them were still there, without shelter of any description, and would no doubt have starved if it had not not been for the kindness of a few government officials, who supplied them with means of subsistence from their own private purses. One would have imagined that owing to the scarcity of labour every Coolie would have been greedily snatched up, and doubtless they would have been if the emaciated countenances and wasted limbs of those that remained had not unmistakably given warning that death had set his seal upon them.

To corroborate what I have stated concerning the transmission of Coolies from Calcutta to the tea-growing districts, I will make a few extracts from a report drawn up by a committee of gentlemen appointed by the Bengal government to inquire into the system.

The opinion at which they arrived was, that "Coolies were shipped in large batches without any arrangement to secure order and cleanliness; that uncooked food was issued without cooks to prepare it; that the medical charge of the Coolies in many cases were left to ignorant Chuprassies, who were entrusted with small supplies of medicine, with the uses of which they were, of course, as ignorant as the men to whom they administered it," and that "labourers

were embarked in some instances almost in a dying state." The committee found that the supply of Coolies was an ordinary commercial transaction between a native contractor and the planter, "all parties considering their duty and responsibility discharged when the living were landed and the cost of the dead adjusted." They also found that "after the Coolies had been inspected by the planter's agent in Calcutta, that feeble and sickly persons were substituted for the healthy men accepted and passed."

It is to be hoped that this state of affairs, discreditable alike to the government and to the planters, has been stopped. There can be no doubt that the Bengal government considered it the duty of those interested in the cultivation of tea, to adopt a systematic and honest course of proceeding in the importation of labour from Calcutta and other parts of India; for Sir John Peter Grant, the late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, on the 20th January, 1860, wrote: "It is not for the government, but for those immediately interested in the tea plantations of Assam, to apply themselves to this as to other requirements of their position." Hence it is clear that the government considered they had no right to interfere in the matter; but nothing can exonerate them for allowing the emigration system to sink to the level of the African slave trade.

A visit to one of the "smiling tea-gardens" of Cachar I had long looked forward to, and on the day after our arrival in the district, the kindness of one of the planters enabled me to gratify my curiosity. As the country in the immediate vicinity of the station was nearly entirely under water, we started on our elephant for the plantation, and after two hours of jolting arrived at a very comfortably-built bungalow. I was astonished when ushered into its comfortable and elegantly furnished rooms. The walls were covered with valuable prints, the furniture was tastefully arranged, and of the latest pattern; baskets containing exquisite orchids were suspended from the three centre arches which divided the sitting from the dining room; a Broadwood's grand piano and a harp occupied one corner; handsome cases well stocked with books, vases of flowers, and other ornaments one might expect to find in a Belgravian drawing-room, completed the furniture of the apartment.

"I see," said my friend the planter, noticing my look of astonishment, "you expected to find us established in a sort of barn, with nothing but the bare necessaries of life around us; but my rule is, wherever I go, to make myself comfortable." And, certainly, things looked like it. Under the circumstances, I felt that the isolation of a tea-planter's life might be made very endurable, though it is right to state that it is not every man who can afford to fare as sumptuously as my friend, or who is blessed with such a helpmate to cheer the monotony of such an existence.

Before sitting down to breakfast, he initiated me into what he called "the secrets of his den." The den consisted of a room hung round with hunting trophies, spears, guns, sporting prints, and meerschaum pipes. In the centre was an office-table covered with letters and papers; and in front of the window was a most luxurious rocking-sofa. This "den," he informed me, was sacred; no one was allowed to enter it unless by special invitation, except a very large kangaroo dog, who appeared to consider the apartment as much his property as his master's, and who exhibited most disagreeable signs of dissatisfaction at my intrusion.

Breakfast over, we proceeded to visit the gardens, the various workhouses, and the village where the people belonging to the plantation resided. The general appearance of a tea-garden may be described in few words. It is exactly like several acres of gooseberry-bushes laid out in rows, the shrubs planted a few feet apart from each other, and about five feet in height, and from five to six in diameter. The tea-plant, which is indigenous to Assam and the slopes of the Himalayas, is peculiarly hardy, and the higher the altitude at which it grows the more fragrant and delicate its flavour. A rich soil and a humid atmosphere with considerable heat, are conducive to luxuriant crops and a tea of the greatest strength; while a light, though not poor, soil, a temperate climate, and a moderate elevation, are more favourable to average crops of the finest or most delicately-flavoured teas.

The cultivation and general treatment of the plant in India is precisely the same as in China; the government having, in 1842, imported experienced Chinese cultivators, manipulators, and manufacturers, to superintend and teach the various processes. The tea of Assam and Cachar is as good as, if not better than, the ordinary tea exported from China, and is free from the obnoxious colouring matter (indigo, I believe) used by the Chinese for the purpose of making it look inviting when packed for the European market. The tea-gardens are generally formed on undulating country. In Assam and Cachar, owing to the great quantity of rain that falls during the year, they do not require artificial irrigation. In consequence of the extreme moisture of these districts, the produce of tea is more abundant and luxuriant than in any district of the same size in the best parts of China.

From the gardens we went to visit the workhouses and godowns, and found young and old, women and children, engaged in the manipulation and manufacture of the leaves. I cannot describe the various processes from the time the leaf is plucked until it is packed for exportation, and stowed away in large dry godowns to await the arrival of a steamer from Calcutta, as it would occupy too much space, and my object is rather to afford a casual glance at a planter's life and habits, and the estate over which he reigns supreme, than to dive into details of the actual culture and manufacture of the tea-plant.

Having described the system of Coolie emigration, it is only fair to say a few words touching the treatment of the Coolie after he becomes the property of the planter. The word "property" may possibly be objected to as savouring too much of American slavery, but is really the right word to use, for he does become to all intents and purposes the property of the planter, and considers himself so. It is true that he may throw up employment at any moment and take his departure, attended by his wife and family, if he be a married man; but the question is where he can go to. He is in a strange land among a strange people, hundreds of miles from his own home, and without means of transit even if he have the money; and he therefore—very wisely in my opinion—regards himself as part of the property of the estate.

In company with my friend I visited the village, which was within a stone's throw of the bungalow. Anything neater, cleaner, or more comfortable, I never saw in my life. I am aware that the plantation I visited was a model one, and that to the lady, who shared the solitary life of my friend, must be accorded a large share of praise for the admirable way in which everything on the estate was conducted, still I have reason to believe, that, as a rule, the tea-planters are as kind and generous to their dependents as they are hospitable to any Europeans who may casually break in upon their loneliness. The Coolies, and indeed the Europeans both male and female, suffer very much throughout the rainy season from leech-bites. My friend was much amused at the state of nervousness I was in during my visit on account of these troublesome creatures. Being armed with boots up to the thigh, he walked along through the thick jungly grass with impunity: while I, before many minutes, found myself attacked by several leeches that had crawled up my trousers and into my boots, and fastened themselves upon my unlucky legs with a viciousness that was perfectly appalling. No sooner had I dislodged one, than another fixed itself upon me, until, in sheer desperation, I was compelled to seek shelter and protection in a pair of "planter's boots." The bite of a Cachar leech is far from pleasant: it causes inflammation, and a great amount of irritation; and one lady I met, the wife of a planter, was ordered home to England on account of severe illness solely caused by the bites of these creatures.

On my return to the station of Cachar, while crossing a large plain, I was surprised at seeing some forty individuals, Europeans and natives, mounted upon small, stout ponies, and armed with long heavy clubs, apparently engaged in desperate conflict. On inquiring the cause of the affray, I was informed that they were playing hockey: a more novel and dangerous piece of amusement I never witnessed. However, both planters and natives, notwithstanding the hard blows and falls they received, appearing to be enjoying themselves excessively, in a weak moment I allowed myself to be inveigled into the mêlée. I found myself unhorsed before many minutes had elapsed, but, though in the thick of the scrimmage, not one of the ponies injured me with his hoofs: all being taught adroitly to avoid treading upon a fallen opponent. The exercise is very healthy and exciting, but needs considerable practice, pluck, and perseverance. This novel method of playing hockey is a very favourite amusement in Cachar, and the planters assemble from miles round, on certain days, solely for the purpose of joining in it.

The amount of nominal capital represented by the tea companies in Bengal up to last November, according to the Calcutta Money Market Circular, was two million eight hundred thousand pounds, and of this enormous sum two million two hundred thousand pounds had been called for. It is intended that all the capital shall be paid up within a limited period, and the calls are spread over intervals of three months. As might have been foreseen, the Calcutta money market has become seriously affected. The Bank of Bengal raised its rate of interest three per cent within a month, and the current rate, when the last mail left, was twelve per cent; as much as twenty per cent had been paid for accommodations to enable shareholders to meet their calls. This state of the money market is likely to continue until the full amount of substantial capital employed in the cultivation of tea has been provided. Notwithstanding this extreme and sudden pressure, shares in tea companies have not depreciated to any serious extent in Calcutta. A parcel were thrown upon the market and sold to the highest bidder by public auction at fifty per cent premium! This of itself will sufficiently indicate the soundness of this new and wonderful industrial enterprise.

Besides the immense number of companies started within the last five years in India, there are several companies established in London for the same purpose, and the shares in all are a favourable security with the investing public.

When the Honourable Mr. Beadon became governor of Bengal, his first act was to visit the provinces of Assam and Cachar. Addressing the European and native gentry of Dibrooghur, he said: "It has always been the first aim of the British government, on the occupation of a province, to give security of life and prosperity to all, and to ensure to every man his just rights. These are the very elements of civilisation and prosperity. That in this district the government has been successful in accomplishing this end, is evident from the increase of wealth, revenue, and population; from the clearance of many thousand acres of forest; from the contented appearance of the people; and from the existence of this thriving town and station in a spot where, a few years ago, the voice of man was not heard."

Surely after such words as these, the strangers who are brought hundreds of miles from their

own homes, to assist in developing the resources of this wonderful country of India, may justly look for encouragement and protection.

POINT BLANK.

You complain that I am narrow,
Going straightly to my aim:
Will you quarrel with the arrow
For the same?

Many a bitter word hast thou:
"Pedant," "bigot." Keep thy blame
While that sword, and nail, and plough
Are the same.

I would cleave my world-path cleanly
With an axe', a razor' edge;
Drive my truth through, not more meanly
Than a wedge.

Far is wide, though force is narrow:
Look straight to thy aim!
Crystal, bud, and flame, and arrow,
Are the same.

THE BLACK ART IN GRUMBLETON.

In my rural parish of Grumbleton, there are many superstitious usages, politely supposed to be obsolete, but in full force and full swing none the less.

A musty remnant of hard-baked loaf—such a loaf as, when it was new, no baker could have sold, and any beggar to whom it might have been given would have thrown to the rats in the gutter—hangs from the ceiling of one of our "models."

The invalid woman, a very spectre in a shroud of rags and wretchedness, will tell us the use of it. Baked on Good Friday, with a few remarks and mysteries by way of incantation and charm, it is all that remains of "the sovereign cure." At all events, the cure has not been complete in this case. The invalid always feels the better for a little bit of it, but must husband it with great care, because it will be months before Good Friday comes again, and if the charm were eaten up, what help could she have but the doctor's, and the doctor—only look at her—has never done her any good.

Now that confidence is established between us, I hear also of a "sovereign cure" for toothache, which has made Grumbleton almost independent of the dentist. It appears that we have a wise woman among us, who can remove the pain without touching the tooth. The patient goes himself, or, if he is too ill, sends a messenger asking relief. About the time that the messenger finds the witch doctress, and even before he tells her his business, the pain ceases. If the sufferer visits her in person, words as mysterious to him as "Propria quæ maribus" are pronounced solemnly, and thrice repeated, after which he experiences the blessing of faith in the black art.

Although the enchantress has great power in Grumbleton, it is a power not to be obtained or bought by money. Money would kill her charms, and, so I am informed, destroy her power.

While Mr. Home and Mr. Zadkiel possess the confidence of persons belonging to educated classes, and while the law forbids us to call such personages by the little simple name that is their due, there is ground for hope that Grumbleton may become a resort of persons of fashion suffering from toothache, and may grow, thanks to our wise woman, into a Spa that shall make all the dentists grind their teeth to the gums for vexation. And couldn't we bake loaves enough on Good Friday to enable us to dispense with the services of the whole medical profession!

Catkins is now a highly respectable young man, though I have known him to be otherwise. He has a young wife and one child, and lives in another of our "models." The child was lately taken ill, so Catkins tells me, and adds that "no doctors, neither parish nor 'firmary, can cure him."

I answer, that with a mother's care and nursing the child may outgrow the disease.

"There is a quicker way," he replies, mysteriously, "if it warn't for a difficulty we are afraid of."

He is going to take the child some fine morning, before long, at sunrise, to a young ash sapling hard by. The sapling is to be split. The child is to be stripped. Catkins is to be permitted to hold the split parts of the sapling far enough asunder to allow his infant to be passed between them by the wise woman, while she repeats mysterious words, which either he does not know, or he dares not communicate. After this is done, the sapling will be carefully bound together, and its wound will be plastered with mud and clay. If the tree grows, the child certainly recovers; if it dies, or is cut down, the disease returns, and will remain for life. "And here," says Catkins, "is the deuce of it all. All the sticks in these parts is wanted for hop-poles every ten or twelve year, and the cure is never safe, because folks won't let 'em be and grow into timber."

"How can you believe such nonsense, James Catkins?"

"I doan't say I do *believe* it exactly; it's a 'speriment. If Polly gets better, I believe it; if the tree lives and she doan't, I shouldn't believe it no more nor nothin' at all."

It further appears that Catkins is suffering from a similar complaint, and he has more than half a mind—at all events, his old mother advises him—to undergo the same process, but then he adds, as I turn away in disgust, "it's cutting down them hop-poles that's the mischief of it."

Here, again, is another very respectable tradeswoman, who has lost the middle finger of her right hand. There was a swelling. The medical man wished to remove the top to save the rest, and so she was persuaded to discard the skill of the doctor for the charms of the witch. Notwithstanding fomentations and poultices, which

doubtless did some good, the wise woman in her wisdom condemned the patient to many days and nights of agony, while portions of the bone came away in little white rings. She hadn't enough faith, so they told her, but at last the finger healed with a huge mis-shapen stump, a fitting finger-post of Grumbletonian superstition.

If we are to be told that such cases are failures, and that the patients are worse off than before, the answer is ready—it does as much good as doctoring, while it costs nothing. Medical men cannot tell how cases may go, even when they have unlimited control over them. Why exclude aid so easily attainable, which does not prevent you from using the regular medical or regular quack remedies?

The enchantress, however, does not always come off with flying colours. A case of rheumatic fever did not receive her especial sympathy and help, and the patient was informed that the wise woman had bewitched her. In order to be set free from her "thrall," the daughter of the sick person, watching her opportunity, one day rushed upon the witch and contrived to scratch her with a brass pin from the shoulder to the wrist. By drawing blood, the spell of witchcraft was removed, but, for some other unknown reason, the patient did not live long afterwards.

When anybody's cow is sick in Grumbleton, instead of sending to the veterinary surgeon, we have a charm in a sealed paper from a "great medicine" in an adjoining village. The charm is fastened on the part affected, and if the cow does not recover, she is judged unworthy to live, and is forthwith sent to the butcher.

Such is the state of the art in Grumbleton as regards the health of man and beast, and can we not also boast of an equal power that is exerted on occasion in support of law and order, a power which, fully developed, would do a great deal towards superseding our police. The other day there was a robbery from one of the cottages of a few shillings and a piece of bacon. Recourse was immediately had, not to the nearest policeman, but to the wise woman aforesaid, and with the happiest results, as will immediately appear.

It was quickly circulated throughout the village that the wise woman, on being informed of the case, remarked that she "knew it afore." She knew who was the thief. And here, all Grumbleton trembled; but we breathed freely again on learning that "it was nobody belonging to the parish."

"Would the property be recovered?" was the next question. "That would depend," was the reply, "upon the thief. If he wished the bacon to choke him, or what he had already eaten, as well as the money, to bring upon him a disorder, compared to which Herod's disease was a trifle, he would continue obstinate. But she would consult her oracle, and an answer would then be returned to her, which she would repeat, if permitted." Two or three days were purposely suffered to elapse, and, before they were over, the owners of the lost property were informed that, on a certain night, it would be restored, and would be found lying on a stone near the cottage. Huge imprecations, however, were denounced, among which blindness by lightning was almost a trifle, so terrible were the conditions of the curse, on all who should dare to be present, or so much as stir out of doors on the evening of the mysterious restitution.

All Grumbleton kept at home that night, nor dared so much as to peep through the keyhole. And it is a fact that the property was safely restored, to the joy of all Grumbleton, and to the great honour and renown of the wise woman thereof.

But, let me do Grumbleton justice. However bad we may be, in some respects, none of us care about ghosts. In this respect, we can bear favourable comparison with any part of England. I have known a stout Yorkshireman not easy in his mind at the thought of passing through a churchyard on his way home at night, lest, as he candidly admitted, the spirits of one or two old fogies he never cared two straws for when in the body, should "play him some unchancy prank now that they had got into free space." I remember a Cumberland minister not proof—good men, I suppose, have their weak points—against horrible anecdotes, current in the neighbourhood, of misfortunes to those who did not make the best of their way, even like Tam O'Shanter, across a bridge some half mile distant; and I know the boys who huddled together under the hedge, and managed some ghostly howls, which by no means retarded his pace as he ran to cross running water. Worthy man, he has no malice in him, for he has had opportunities enough of repaying his tormentors in kind, for it is long since he was gathered to his fathers, and has reached a place, I hope, where nobody is afraid.

Still, in obscure parts of the country, where a railway whistle has never sounded, or the daily press penetrated—terrible foes to ghosts, fairies, and witchcraft, are railways and printing—numberless, still, are the apparitions respectably attested to, and devoutly believed in; so numerous are they, that a solitary ghost is scarce worth mention, where every house, barn, and lane has its tutelary bogie, and where one may see the long funeral procession of headless mourners enter the church-porch, or issue from it, on any more than usually rough winter's night. But pass along our village at night, and you will find indications enough that Grumbleton, though it may—indeed, does—believe in ghosts, doesn't care a rap for any of them.

A story, told of our worthy old rector, Drowse, and never contradicted by him, will show the state of feeling on the subject.

He was out late many years ago, wind howling through the trees, roads heavy with mud and rain, horse tired and rider too, and the night dark as pitch. Although Drowse thought he knew his way pretty well, yet, what with the darkness, and the cross-roads, and the overhanging woods, he missed his road, and as,

by bad luck, the woods ranged on either side for miles, there was a bad prospect before him —one of spending the night in them. At length, there twinkled a light through the trees, and, as he made the best of his way towards it, he saw several more lights, and made out what was, doubtless, a large house full of company, to judge from the blaze of light from the windows as he came into full view. He should, at all events, dismount here, and ask his way. So he led his horse up the avenue, and rang the door-bell. The door immediately opened, and, before he well knew what he was about, as he afterwards said, he had stepped across the threshold. The entrance-hall was large and handsome, with a fine old oak staircase branching right and left, and facing the entrance. The room was hung round with pictures, one or two of the style of Holbein, and some apparently of older date. He found himself, to his surprise, in the presence of some guests of the evening.

It was an abrupt unintentional intrusion, but there was no help for it. A venerable old gentleman, whom Drowse thought at first he had known when he was a boy, but then he recollected that he had been dead for years, stepped forward with the unsurpassed politeness of the gentleman of the old school, and, finding a benighted traveller who had lost his way, at once proffered him hospitality. His horse was taken good care of, the traveller was brushed up a little by a couple of footmen who wore hair-powder, and our good parson was made as presentable as the exigencies of the case permitted.

The company was numerous, and the rector congratulated himself on having fallen into pleasant quarters. Some of the company sang beautiful old English glees and madrigals: "When first I saw your face," "Summer is a-coming in," "Strike it up, neighbour, with pipe and with tabor." "Nice folks, all of 'em," thought Drowse; "how well they sing!" The venerable old gentleman then produced a violin, and played one or two of Corelli's solos, accompanied by his sister, who managed the thorough-bass part beautifully. Very odd it all seemed to Drowse, and beautiful as well as odd. Then followed a prelude and fugue of Bach's, which it would have delighted King Joachim himself to have heard. Then came a dance between two stately old ladies, which was called a Sarabande, followed by another, much more lively and spirited, called Bourrée by the young ones, which was explained to him to be a Provençal dance of the time of René the king. Those who did not care for music and dancing had a round game at cards in the next room, excepting a couple of gentlemen in a corner, who looked, Drowse thought, liked Church dignitaries somewhat out of their element, for they took very little notice of the company. But the great attraction was the music, and if the intruder learned nothing else by his visit, he was charmed with the compositions of the great old song and fiddle masters, and much wondered that he had never heard any of them before.

At last the company began to disperse. A carriage, containing the two sisters who danced the Sarabande, was going his way, he was told, and would pilot him through the wood. On taking leave of his host, he wished to know to whom he had been indebted for so pleasant an evening? The venerable old gentleman smiled and told his name. Drowse started. "The very name and form," he replied, "of an old friend—a great musician, who was very kind to me when I was a boy. But he's been dead for years," he added. The old gentleman smiled again, but made no remark, beyond wishing him a polite and cordial adieu, and the traveller was soon on his way, splashing through the mud after the carriage.

At first the pace was pretty good, but his guides had lights and knew the road, and any way he must keep up with the carriage. In a few seconds, however, he found it well-nigh impossible. The trot became a gallop soon, and Drowse, under the impression that the horses in front of him were running away, and that it was his duty as a clergyman to be in at the death, gave his horse the spur and followed at the top of his speed.

The lights in front bounced up and down, the equipage reeled and staggered as if it would upset every moment, but it didn't upset. Not so the rector. A sudden sharp turn, which the carriage had safely taken, tossed the luckless clergyman over his horse's head. How long he remained in this state, stunned, as he described it, by the fall, he never knew; but when he came to himself he was lying on the ground in the thicket, and the horse was standing quietly beside him.

In the midst of his perplexity, wondering what would become of him, and shivering with cold, for he was wet through, he heard the stroke of twelve from a church tower. This proved his rescue, for by the tone of the bell he recognised his whereabouts. So he made his way to the neighbouring church, which was the means of setting him all right, as a church ought to be.

Some stupid people said that our old friend fell asleep on horseback, tumbled off, and dreamed the story. As he comes of a sleepy family, there was, perhaps, some likelihood in the surmise. But Drowse declared he didn't, and adds that he never dreamt anything in his life, except the night before his wedding, when he dreamed he had lost the ring at the moment it was wanted. Anyway, it is firmly believed in Grumbleton to this day that he spent the evening with a party of ghosts, who were not only innocent and harmless, but hospitable and accomplished. Circumstances certainly give much force to this popular belief, among which is the fact that he has never since been able to find that house, or met with any of the guests.

Dreams have a good number of believers among us, but dreams are on a better footing than superstitions. That the mind should continue the exercise of its faculties while its tenement of clay lies inert and motionless, is

no new theory. The belief that thoughts may pass through the mind in one's sleep, and be even of after-use when the memory has retained them, has nothing, I should think, of the supernatural in it, however singular and interesting it may be. When both body and soul are at work together, how many contingencies are speculated upon as likely to happen, some of which, in the course of events, do come to pass. Once concede that the mind does not always take its complete repose when the body does, and we have a clue to some wonderful things foretold in dreams. But, as Drowse says, whether in men or dogs there must be brains, or there is little chance for the imagination to work, either asleep or awake; and I partly believe him.

A few more superstitions have not much mischief in them. We tin-kettle our bees. We think it unlucky to upset the salt; lucky to find a horseshoe; and those Grumbletonians who are particular about their nails—but the number is very small—will on no account pare them on a Friday.

Still a few defensive charms may be mentioned. On each side of the stable-door, on the first of May, is hung up a birch bough, to keep witchcraft from the horses. It is occasionally a bough of maple instead of birch.

Old Christmas-day is most scrupulously kept among us. Horses must not be worked on that day, nor must women go out of doors. We kill our pigs at the full moon; then the bacon "plums up," so says Grumbleton, and is lucky. It is lucky also for the heir who inherits from one dying at full moon; his estate then, like the bacon, "plums up." If death occurs when the moon is waning, the fortune will injure its inheritor. No instance is, however, on record of an estate being refused because it fell to a man under such malign lunar influences, though its worse than worthlessness is as well authenticated as the belief that bacon will not cure if the pig is killed after full moon. One instance, rather descriptive of the nature of the viper than adding much to Grumbleton superstition, may be subjoined.

Two or three country fellows intently examining a viper, cut in two by the scythe of the mower.

"Can't read that 'ere," says one.

"Knows the English of it, anyway," says another.

"What's the matter, my lads?"

I hereupon am informed that the mottled part of the dying reptile consists of writing in an unknown tongue.

The translation is known to my informant, and is as follows:

> If I could hear as well as see,
> No man or beast should pass by me.

Now comes the question, what harm is there in all this strong popular belief? "Superstition, and acts of superstition, cannot elevate, but debase the mind." So said the good Dr. Arnold. The remark is just, and it is one that others beside Grumbletonians might not be worse for remembering.

It is a singular fact, and one which, in this great educational period, is worth attention, that our rural poor are not more enlightened than the parishioners of Selborne were in Gilbert White's time, a century ago. In White's chapter of the Superstitions of Selborne may be found an instance nearly identical with that furnished by Catkins in this year of grace 1864. The only differences between the two cases are, that the incantation is performed at sunset instead of sunrise, and that there is no mention of witches or hop-poles.

Nor are our peasantry better than their fathers with regard to superstitious actions. But for the strong arm of the law, the land would be full of them. A poor deaf and dumb Frenchman, who had taken refuge in a country village in Essex, was but recently done to death by the process of swimming him for a wizard. The poor creature kissed the hand of one who would have saved him, but could not. It was the only sign of gratitude in his power to make. It was the mute appeal for the help of a fellow-mortal at the mercy of a brutal mob. The appeal made in an enlightened age and country proved ineffectual, and ignorance and brutality destroyed their victim.

Acts of superstition, even when apparently of small importance, whether fashionable or unfashionable, should be scorned and rejected on the ground of their debasing influence. Mayfair, just now, cannot afford to sneer at Grumbleton.

HOME DINNERS.

At the head of the table of the arts and sciences, let us place with becoming dignity, the science or the art of social dining. Theoretical and practical text-books issue every month from the press for the use of students, but the study itself wants a name as great as its importance. The Greeks, who took the chief meal of their day at our now customary evening dinner-hour, gave it the most dignified of names, as "to Ariston"—the Best. Whoever prepared dinner was said in their language to Do his Best. Whoever received another to dinner was said to aristize, or make-the-best-of him. Dinner-time was the Best Hour, and a dinner companion was synaristos, a fellow-at-the-Best. So let us, if we want a long word, give to the science of fellowship in dining all the dignity of six-syllabled Greek, and call it Synaristology. Gastronomy, which is, by interpretation, paunch-law, looks no further than the pots and kettles, and we are a long way ahead of Epicurus. Synaristology is the art of comradeship in the best meal, by making the best of one's self, the best of one's friends, and the best of one's victuals.

Let us understand clearly, too, that this is an universal science, or at best a science common to all men who have bread to break. Let us

scout and despise the miserable notion of one fixed exalted form of conventional dinner-party, to which all must yield themselves, or resign hope that they may ever dare to divide mutton with a friend. It is a deadly heresy that has been on the increase of late, and has been setting up the conventional for the real standard of hospitality in house after house. The result is, that at this day many a genial man of moderate income, who is at once sensible and sensitive, will not attempt to do what he cannot do well; and because he dares not defy the conventional heresies, does violence to his inclinations, and asks to his house no dinner-guests but those who are content to share his customary meal. Other men, equally genial but less sensitive, do not flinch from the dinner of compromises with which English society is too familiar. They ask their friends to swallow the greengrocer-butler, the cheap wines of an expensive sort, the ill-made sauces, and the lukewarm entremets with ambitious names: lumps of spoilt food horribly unlike anything that a sane man with a healthy stomach would, of his own free choice, on any day of the year, sit down to eat. Enough of this. Let us be sociable, let us be liberally festive, but let us be honest withal, and let each man give in his own way, and according to his taste and means, his own best welcome to his friend.

Dr. Johnson was sound in his distinction when he said of a dinner he had eaten that it was "a good dinner enough, but not a dinner to ask a man to," but the vulgarly polite interpretation of "a dinner to ask a man to" is not at all sound. Let us see how this is. Aristology, or the science of Dinner-fellowship, sets out, as we have said, with the three postulates, that it calls on a man to make the best of himself, and of his friends, and of his victuals. In a conventional dinner, even where the victuals are of the best, the third of these conditions has not been fulfilled. The mind of the host is not in the feast he has spread. If the courtesy also be formal, or if the show of cordiality towards only one guest be insincere, if there be one man with his legs under the mahogany whose presence is not really wanted, but who has been asked to dinner by reason of some conventional sense of necessity, then we say of such a banquet, let the cooks who made it, eat it. There is a fly in the pot. The dinner stinks, and we will none of it. It is true that there are some of us so unhappily situated that we think ourselves obliged, and perhaps are obliged, to ask people whom we do not care for to formal dinners. For such conventional guests the conventional is the fit form of dinner. The victualling of these discordant guests is like buying or selling on 'Change—a pure matter of business; and as stockbrokers, merchants, and tradesmen formularise all methods of business transaction because they find it convenient in commerce to hide their individualities behind phrases appointed to express all customary wants and relations of their business life, so may we formularise our dinners whenever they are mere matters of debtor and creditor account, as now and then they must be. But as the merchant when he converses with his private friends drops the style of his business intercourse, so should the host, when he is at home with his true friends about him, abjure the vain repetitions of the heathen, and delight to give a dinner *like himself*. For, we may reckon it the first great law in Synaristology that the dinner itself should be honestly individual. The perfect host is bound to put his mind into it, and make it accord in the best manner with his means, his taste, or any special opportunity he may have of setting forth in the most pleasant manner, one, or a few, or many, of the meats and drinks that are best after their kind. Let us give to the right form of English social dinner a right English name, and call it a Home Dinner. By asking a man to a family dinner, it is understood already that we ask him to share the ordinary dinner of the household. The conventional dinner-party that we know too well, let us leave henceforth to the uses it will always have in the mere commerce of society. But let us mean by a Home Dinner, a domestic festival for those whom the host knows, or desires to know, as his real friends or well-liked acquaintances, and in whose company he means to make the best of himself, of them, and of his victuals.

He will not make the best of himself if his dinner be in any way a sham. He must fairly and fearlessly proportion its cost to his means. This he must not do as one who pinches himself and his household in private that once a year, or oftener, by a strained effort that gives pleasure to nobody, he may afford to make his dinner-table a coarse imitation of the table of a duke; his board must be spread as that of one who likes often to see his best friends about him, and who, without discomfort to himself, knows how, whenever they come, to entertain them well. The scale of the Home Dinner being, then, in the first place, honestly proportioned to the income of the host and his resources, the indispensable condition of its plan is that everything of which it consists shall be of its kind the best. If the best quality of costly wines be too expensive, then those wines must not have their names taken in vain at the Home Dinner. There are wholesome and excellent wines of less cost, and of one or two of these the best quality should very carefully be chosen. If possible, let there be no mutton but four year old, no beef but Highland bred. In short, the Home Dinner is to mean, whatever its degree of costliness, a sincere welcome, hearty intercourse, and meats and drinks, however modest their character and small their variety, pleasantly set forth, each the best after its kind. Let all assent to this, and there is an end to a legion of social nuisances.

As the world now runs, friendship, based upon like-mindedness rather than upon like-moneyedness, is constantly arising between men of very different degrees of income. Tomkins has two, three, four, five, six, seven, or eight hundred a year and a family; Wilkins has fifteen hundred

a year and no family. T. and W. are firm friends. T. may dine with W., but looks in vain for the great satisfaction of seeing his friend W.'s toes on his own fender. For if T. of the seven or eight hundred should ask W. to dinner, W.'s reflection is: "I like T., but I do not like bad melted butter. He will give me the conventional thing as a mess; I shall be delivered into the hands of a second-rate pastrycook, and dosed by the greengrocer with Moët at forty shillings a dozen. I have a heart, but I have also a stomach." Let him be sure that the difference of means will appear only in the honest shape of a simpler dinner, involving no costly strain after the unattainable, but nevertheless perfect after its kind, and Wilkins, glad to dine with his friend Tomkins, may find that he dines better with him than even at the costly banquets of his Grace the Bishop of Rypophagon.

One difficulty only stands in the way of a triumphant success for this Home Dinner system. The master and the mistress of a house may have gathered flowers to adorn their feast, have been at pains to select the choicest of its kind for the material of every dish, but how are they to secure all against the mishap of a dirty saucepan, the stupidity or inattention of a cook who has no soul for the delicacies of her art? It is true that the Home Dinner system, even when it breaks down, is an abated evil, for where the cook is not faithful over a few things, how shall she be faithful over many? Where the principle of action is to work within limits proportioned to the resources of the house and its master for the utmost attainable perfection of result, the cook whose energies are not unreasonably taxed is put upon her mettle, and if she be made of ordinary flesh and blood, the very best work of which she is capable will be got out of her. Bad is usually the best if she be let alone; for the cook, even when she has been taught by practice to reproduce a certain number of preparations of food without spoiling them very much, and writes herself "thorough good" in the advertisements, has not been trained to think, and is ignorant of the first principles of what is, in fact, a strictly intellectual employment. Before we can reform our cooks, we must reform a million or two of our mistresses, and restore among them the old genius for household government in all its branches. It is because the natural queen of the household has either dropped the reins of its government, or become lax of rule, that servants now-a-days claim absence of oversight as if it were their right, and resent any gentle attempt that may be made to "teach them their business." It concerns a great many higher things than the production of good dinners that this should not be so. No degree whatever of rank or wealth should be held to release the mistress of a household from fulfilment of the duties of her government. The nobler the lady, the more elevating should be the contact with her mind, which is the just right of all who form part of her household.

Something of this is at the root of the argument of an enthusiastic gentleman who has a strong way of speaking wholesome truths, and who has written a couple of warm-blooded little books, entitled "The Gentlewoman," and "Dinners and Dinner Parties" (published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall). The Registrar-General, he says, tells us that only one woman in twelve, and only one man in five, dies leaving property, and what is left, except the great wealth of a few, is of small average amount. Nevertheless, upwards of twenty millions of money are annually wasted in this country, through want of a proper knowledge of the way to deal with food. Our royal princesses have received lessons in model kitchens, have been taught to weigh out stores, and even to make bread and churn butter. Many ladies of the English nobility, and more on the Continent, have maintained the old custom of attending personally to the superintendence of their household, and such ladies inspire with their intelligence the action of their cooks. In Canada the ladies play, and sing, dance, ride, skate, often are well read and good linguists, while they know at the same time how to make good bread, and cakes, and jellies, and how to rear poultry. Consequently, they give to home more of the cheer of order and nicety, with the help of a single servant girl, than one is accustomed to find in the household of an English couple with three servants. At Xeres de la Frontera, the author of this plea for a graceful homeliness among the English gentlewomen of all classes, dined with a Spanish grandee, whose wife showed him with pride the light luxurious kitchen in which she herself had attended not only to the direction but also to the manipulation of the dinner, and, he adds, "it *was* a dinner." The gentlewoman who adds to her accomplishment a first-rate knowledge and tact in the direction of the duties of the kitchen is mistress, he says, not quite untruly, of an art equal to that of the physician; "a noble art it is; it is a sweetener of temper, it is the sweetener of life, it prolongs life. It is a far nobler art to be able to prepare that which shall agree with the delicate organisation of the human frame, than the art which is employed to get rid of the injurious effects of bad cooking." If you mix dirt with your coal you dull the fire in your grate, and if you mix dirt with your food you dull, says this apostle of clean ladylike cookery, the fire of life within your bodies, or those of your friends. Of course, then, we have here a writer who agrees with us thoroughly in deprecation of dinners that, by help of a pastrycook, affect magnificence beyond the giver's means. "No, no," he cries, "there is no dinner like an honest dinner for a party of eight or twelve out of a model kitchen—it is enjoyment instead of burlesque, it is friendship instead of deceit."

And the model kitchen is an economy, not an extravagance, for in the long run cleanliness is always cheaper than dirt. The poor gentleman whose wife is skilled in household duty will make every scrap of food pleasant and whole-

some. "She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her."

The model kitchen, described by the author of these little books, needs no immense range, devouring tons upon tons of coal. In it, a good dinner is cooked to the moment, at the cost of a few pence for fuel. It is established in any small room, handy to the dining-room; that room, for example, which a doctor, if he occupied the house, would make his surgery; and everything it contains is absolutely clean. The very cloths used in it are washed at home in clean water, with soda only, and without contact with yellow soap. The stewpans are bright; the dozen saucepans of each required size, from the butter saucepan to that which is large enough to simmer an aitchbone of beef, are of fireproof porcelain; and cookery is achieved also in porcelain dishes that come, with their contents uncooled, direct to the dinner-table. There is in one corner of this kitchen, a china sink large enough to soak a ham, with water laid on, and a tap to let it off. Where gas cannot be had, the American stove is used; but in towns where gas is laid on, the model cooking stove should be a gas stove, to which the heat can be applied and regulated at discretion, without waste, with but slight increase of the temperature of the room, and—not the least consideration—with the utmost possible saving of waste in the meat. In such a home-kitchen, under the skilled care of a lady, the cold mutton reappears as a delicacy, piping hot; and the simple dinner of beefsteak and summer cabbage is set on the table of the thrifty, cooked to perfection, and so hot that a cold plate is almost welcome. Let not the housewife take fright at the mention of porcelain dishes and saucepans. Such cooking utensils are now made at Dresden, and used very generally on the Continent. They will not, it is true, bear any kitchenmaid's rough battering about; but used by gentlewomen and by well-trained handmaids, they may last for ever, while the use of them gets rid of all the labour and dirt of imperfect pot-scouring.

There can be no doubt that the use of ladies' kitchens, each fitted with an American or gas-stove, and furnished upon some such plan as this, would, in the first place, tend greatly to the promotion of frugality, and to the bettering of cooks. The mistress of the household would not only teach by precept and example, but would excite curiosity and emulation. Her little laboratory would be a school of nicety and cleanliness, and the whole house would reap the benefit of its teachings: while no cook could stand long in defence of the old ground of ignorant and negligent routine in face of the results she would be seeing constantly produced by the application of a little study and care to her art. And there can be no doubt that, in the second place, where the mistress thus skilfully gives her mind to the entertainment of her guests, and is not ashamed of her personal interest in the results of her own foresight, but, on the contrary, is proud to have it known that this or that well-contrived dish has been the work of her own hands, the Home Dinner is most surely to be enjoyed in its perfection. Such a mistress is usually the one who can make the piano sing, while her neighbour, who is ashamed of household duty, only beats and tortures it. It is the thorough housewife who, at the head of the table which her skill has furnished with the best of fare, knows how to bring a cheerful heart and a sound cultivated intellect to the elevation of the table-talk about her: while her neighbour, who is ashamed to be thought capable, and is grossly incapable, of household duty, can only produce minced common-places upon the emptiest topics that happen to be accounted fashionable by the politer sort of addle-pates.

Away, then, we say again, with the whole greasy indigestible sham of conventional dinner-parties, aping a style inconsistent with the natural means of the giver. Let us substitute for it the Home Dinner everywhere, honest and characteristic. Who would not exchange a pretentious mess, diluted with counterfeit wines, for a hot well-cooked chop, a mealy potato, and a glass of Bass or Allsopp? Let the Home Dinner, of course, so far exceed the daily fare of the house giving it, as to express with a right generosity the hospitable mind. But while the material expenditure is held modestly within its just and honest bounds, let the expenditure of thought be without stint. If ladies studied cookery as their foremothers did, there would be no house without its individual recipes and original dishes. Some housewives would be famous for one thing, some for another, and the plague of sameness would soon vanish from our entertainments.

What constant variety may, without extravagance, be introduced into the ordinary meals of a household, is partly shown in a capital new housekeeper's book called Cre-fydd's Family Fare. It gives a range of varying breakfasts and dinners for every day in the year, and adds a store of recipes to show how everything that is mentioned is to be prepared. Such a book would carry any housewife, resolved to become pleasantly skilled, as she ought to be, in culinary lore, far on her way. But the great end for her to achieve, is such an acquaintance with principles, and such familiarity with the best-known combinations in the cookery of food, as will enable her to run alone. Her aim should be to work as the skilled physician works when he has gone through hospital training, by individual tact and intelligence applied to every case. Let it be her ambition to find three hundred and sixty-five ways of treating a rumpsteak, all of them better than the simple use of the gridiron. For, if she can do that, she will deserve to have her name inscribed by that of Shakespeare, and to have some day her tercentenary kept with a great Home Dinner, to which all England shall sit down without quarrelling, everything set forth

being of the best, and everybody at the great round table making the best—for a wonder—of himself and of his neighbour.

FARMING BY STEAM.

By the help of railways, the callings of the farmer and the merchant, in districts within easy reach of some of the great towns, are now united. This fact is beginning to tell hard on some of the tenant-farmers who depend entirely on the produce of their lands for livelihood. The losses and crosses incidental to the farm are borne by the merchant-farmer with a resignation not common among country people. He has seen, in the oscillations of commerce, larger sums lost or won by a single stroke, than his crop and stock could make in a whole year; so he has learnt to take his rebuffs quietly. At the same time, he is keen at a bargain, and there is no waste allowed on his establishment. When he has reckoned up the amount to be provided for rent; his rent-charge commutation in lieu of tithes; his land tax, poor rates, bad hay, mouldy grain, diseased cattle—and a dozen obstinate and ugly facts which could be so dwelt upon as to make the old original British farmer a prophet of woe in the market-place for fifty-two weeks every year—this new farmer consoles himself, when a few hundreds are on the wrong side of his farm accounts, with the reflection that they only represent the cost of relaxation from the cares of business. Therefore he will go on selling his bacon at sixpence when it cost him a shilling a pound, and butter at fourteenpence which a careful calculation proves to have cost him half-a-crown. His chickens, ducks, and turkeys, are almost a success. He can rear them within a trifle of what he could buy them for in the meat market, after he has had the pleasure of seeing them run about, and of hearing them cackle and crow "extra parliamentary utterances."

Wherever such men bring their wealth into the farmer's neighbourhood, the farmer who is dependent on his land for bread cannot sustain their competition. Whatever may be the ultimate tendency of this disturbing influence on agriculture, its earlier results do not at present tend to improve the position of the poorer class of farmers.

But skill and enterprise are now brought into action by our merchant-agriculturists. They will have the best machinery; and, though a good many implements prove useless, they bear the expense of practical trial; poorer men wait and learn from them when the inventor's effort really produces a saving of time, labour, and outlay. It would be idle now to speak of steam as an experiment, when all the men who are at the head of their profession look on it as indispensable upon the farm. It makes its way quietly but surely. The old plough, that lazily scratched its one furrow, is given up for an implement which passes briskly over the ground, and turns up in its progress three furrows, or even more, at every passage. The wheat, barley, beans, peas, and oats, are expeditiously thrashed out on a fine autumn day according to demand, and there is no more flail work, however handy the flail may have been of old as occupation for the men in wet and boisterous weather. With influences of this kind, the education and manners of the tenantry have really kept pace. Some time ago a shrewd writer spoke of such farmers as men to whom their grandfathers would have taken off their hats; and no one who remembers some of their grandfathers, and has visited the Royal Agricultural Society's show-yard, or meetings of the local associations, or the corn and cattle markets in our better-farmed districts, will dispute the truth of such a saying. That many are still lagging behind their day is true of every class of men.

The present tendency of farming is, however, to the use of capital upon large farms. Many small farmers must be, sooner or later, driven from the field. The change may be, and should be, slow. Already some landowners who have numerous small farms appear to be expecting and endeavouring to defer the full accomplishment of such a change. At an important county meeting recently held in the north of England, it was suggested that a certain number of tenants should unite and form a company for purchase and use of steam machinery. The plan remains to be tried, and is open to criticism. Given any ten men with small holdings and a steam-engine for their common use: each farmer will want to thrash his grain so as to sell to the best advantage, even if he resign the use of the steam-engine on other occasions to his neighbour. On arable land the cleverest and most enterprising man of the ten will win. He will with equal conditions out-general the nine, buy their machinery, and rent their land. The remains of the company will descend a step in the social ladder, and become in name what they are now in fact—farm labourers. The practice of hiring machinery by the job is common in some counties, but the farmer in that case seldom has the use of it on the days most convenient and profitable to himself. The capitalist who owns the steam power, and land enough to keep it well employed, has still the larger and the surer profits.

On dairy farms, where wife and family assist in the care and management of three or four cows, or even on fruit lands, where the same help is available, the conditions of a livelihood may remain much as they are at present. At all events, changes in store for them are too remote to need present attention.

One chief occupation for many of the small tenant-farmers who are now, it is to be feared, being forced into a false position by the new agents at work on the farm, will be that of farm bailiffs. Such men are conversant with practical details, and trustworthy. It is true that men are born to a wholesome discipline of trouble, and must find their level in the world in the natural progress of affairs. But it is most honourable of those landowners who would devise some means for protecting families, long

settled on their estates, from hurt by changes which, however inevitable, it is the duty of all to make, as far as possible, simply beneficent. If there be truth in this belief, then the new ways opened to improvement of the position of farm labourers will be found worthy of special and generous consideration. These useful members of the community will be more than ever a class by themselves, and as the work will, therefore, be better done, the country will, under the known principle of "each man to his trade," become the gainer. The farm labourer has, indeed, means of raising his position above the point he has hitherto attained. The difficulty is to convince him of it, and make him his own friend. Assistance may be afforded him, information may be offered, good legislation may be substituted for that which appears unsound; but, after all, we cannot compel him to better himself any more than he can force his horses to drink after taking them to water. Let us give him all fair means of bettering his lot. And let us keep the stream of his life pure as we may.

Whatever be the difference of wages to farm labourers—and the range is considerable—the average payment throughout the country is, we are told, eleven-and-fourpence a week. An industrious man, in good health, can, with the help of his household, earn enough honestly to maintain himself, his wife, and family, with much about the same struggle in one part of England as another. Therefore, we need not go into any question of comparison of those who have cheap fuel, gardens, low rent, permission to keep a pig, and nine shillings a week wages, with others who live in expensive districts where every perch of land is wanted by a farmer, paying nearly double the amount in cash wages, but adding to them few perquisites or pickings.

Neither is the average day's work of ten hours too much for an able-bodied countryman. It may be noted that the steam-engine compels a fair day's work for a fair day's wages, and the reaping-machine has done much to discourage strikes for increase of wages among the reapers, at the critical juncture of a ripe crop and a sunny morning. Generally, also, now that prejudice is adjusting itself to the new phase of farming life, there is a better and more social feeling between the workmen on the farm, which is a pleasure and a gain to men and masters.

But what we said years since of the unfenced factory machinery, it is to a certain degree necessary to repeat of the use of steam-engines among the farmers. Enough has not yet been done to secure farm labourers against accidents arising from machinery. So long ago as the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society at Chester, in 1858, the danger was thus pointed out in the judges' report in a rather alarming manner:

"On entering the show-yard at Chester, the visitor's direct path to the stock and implements lay through an avenue of steam-engines, neatly arranged at equal distances, their fly-wheels in (perpetual) motion, presenting a very animated scene; but what would have been the effect produced on the visitor's nerves had he known that three of these engines were liable to burst at any moment? It is hardly necessary to say that the stewards, on being informed by one of the judges of this serious fact, immediately ordered their fires to be extinguished; and the police had strict injunctions to remove any man from the show-yard who should attempt to get steam up in a dangerous engine."

There may have been reasons for limiting the action of the Society to protecting visitors to its own show-yard, but a danger to the farm labourer, thus deliberately foreshadowed, ought surely to have been met and averted. Yet no legislative interference appears to have been attempted, and that which was threatened has come to pass.

In the course of the recent harvest, fatal accidents have occurred by the bursting of such engines. In one case, at Plaxtol, in Kent, where a life was lost, skilled evidence was given before the coroner, to the effect that the plate which burst was "decomposed generally."

Another fatal accident, in which two lives were lost, happened from the same cause at Clearsfield, in Suffolk. The agricultural society of the county has in consequence, it is said, passed a resolution under which the association recommends the appointment of a competent engineer as "inspector of such motors." The inspection is proposed to be made at least half-yearly, at a certain fixed payment per engine, to be shared between the owners and the society. The inspector is further to examine every "engine driver" as to his fitness, and will certify his fitness, and authorise him to wear a badge in testimony of the same when at work.

The danger of bursting is certainly not likely to decrease as such machines become old; and, unless measures of precaution be taken before next harvest, we may fairly expect a further waste of human life. The recommendation of the Kentish jury is surely worth the attention of parliament. Why should it not be made somebody's duty to provide generally that security which the county of Suffolk is already striving to obtain for her own farm labourers?

Engine-driving, as it is called, would thus become, as it should be, a distinct occupation, by which a higher rate of pay in one new occupation for the better class of farm labourer would be obtained. But it is a notorious evil, that a common farm labourer, who knows no more of the steam-engine than he does of logarithms, should be entrusted with its management. Such men are painstaking, and with instruction would, no doubt, qualify themselves for the duty. We asked one of them recently why he was not at work on the engine? His reply was: "Well, sir, I thought she was getting very old, and, if she blowed up, my Reputation would be blowed up with her"—he did not think about his life—"so I came along home."

The class of accidents on farms is fast coming to resemble those in mills: loss of fingers or

toes, or haply an arm, by the machine. If we enter a shed of one of the Society's shows, where the engines are at play, and the different machinery now introduced on farms is on the whirl, the wonder is that accidents are not more common.

ON FIRE!

The recent terrible catastrophe in Santiago recals vividly to my mind one of the most extraordinary adventures of my chequered life.

Five-and-twenty years ago, I was captain of the Northern Light, a large schooner trading between Hull and St. Petersburg. A long acquaintance with the vicissitudes of the Russian climate had made me somewhat reckless. The consequence was, that one 30th of October I found my vessel tight locked in ice. I had stayed a week too long, in my eagerness to take a full cargo of timber, and I was justly punished for my temerity: a prisoner till the middle or end of April, far away from my friends, and doing what a livery-stable-keeper would call "eating my own head off."

Being, however, of a sanguine temperament, and having no wife at home to be anxious about, I resolved to make the best of it, and enjoy myself as well as I could. I saw all the sights of St. Petersburg, from Peter the Great's wooden house down to the Mammoth. I visited Moscow. I went bear-hunting. I drove about in sledges. I fell in love and fell out again. Nor did I neglect business. I frequently attended the Exchange, and made myself known to the chief tallow, hemp, and timber merchants. I studied Russian commerce. I arranged for cargoes for two years to come. The Anglo-Russians are very hospitable, and, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Anderson, the English banker, my hotel expenses were very small. My fur coats were my chief expense; they cost me a large sum then; but I reckoned that they would last me my life, and so they have—at least, I wear them to this day.

Nevertheless, I pined for the hour of liberty. An idle life did not suit a man of my temperament—one who had been at sea ever since he was twelve years old. Like all sailors, I was always grumbling against the sea, and yet I was never happy away from it. At last the order of my release came. The ice on the Neva, opposite the Custom-house especially, began to melt into thin bars an inch or so wide. It became dangerous to venture on it, except where it was piled with snow. The ice-slabs on the quay began to break, when I pushed them with my stick, into glassy fragments. Here and there some spaces began to open, and dirty brown snow water pooled on the surface. There had been several warm days, but now rain and wind came, and they soon melted the walls of my crystal prison. Sledges still ventured on the Neva, though the water rose up to the horses' knees.

One morning, when I looked out of my window on the ground floor at Miss Benson's, on the English quay, the water had all gone from the surface of the ice; that was the well-known sign that the ice had become too porous and spongy to hold water, and in a few hours would break away from the banks and begin to float seaward.

I had just sat down to breakfast, when a thunder-peal of cannon broke from the fortress.

"What is that, Miss Benson?" I said to our hostess at the head of the table.

"That," she replied, "is the signal that the commander of the citadel, with his officers, is crossing the river, to present the Emperor at the Winter Palace with a goblet of Neva water in token of the return of spring. The Emperor will give him the cup back filled with ducats."

"Hurrah!" I cried; "then hey for old England!"

It took me some days to get the ship off, for it was tedious going backwards and forwards to Cronstadt. It was the Butter week time: that seven days' feast which precedes Lent, and is followed by the rejoicing of Easter. In the intervals of business, as I went to and fro to my agent's, I amused myself with observing the revelry of this great Russian festival.

There were thousands of peasants devouring blinni (pancakes), and caviare, honey-cakes, and nuts. There were swings, see-saws, and roundabouts. The great square of the Admiralty was the chief scene of the amusements. Close to the Winter Palace, the War-office, and the Senate-House, there were scores of temporary theatres, and long lines of ice mountains, down which the sledges kept rushing incessantly, amid the shouts and laughter of the good-natured but wild-looking peasants. At the doors of the theatres stood the tea-sellers, with huge brazen semovars smoking in the centre of their tables, and surrounded by countless teapots. The shopkeepers themselves, in fur caps and gloves, stood by their stalls, stamping, and clapping their hands, and shouting: "Gentlemen, will you please to take a glass of warm tea, with lemon or cream? How will you take the sugar?" (for a true Russian keeps his sugar in his mouth, and does not put it into his teacup). The Admiralty square was strewn with nut-shells; here and there a drunken bear of a peasant, a mere reeling bundle of greasy sheepskin, jostled against me, and then, with the simple-hearted politeness of his race, took off his hat and hiccuped out: "Pardon me, my little father, but remember it is Butter week."

One day I sallied out into the great square about noon to see the grandees of the capital drive through the fair, and I never saw such a sight. The line was guarded by mounted gendarmes, dressed like lancers, and wearing light blue uniforms with brown epaulettes. There were Chinese, Turks, Tartars, Germans, Englishmen, Russian princes, priests, soldiers, bearded merchants and their portly wives, Circassian officers, colonels of the body-guard in their eagle-crowned

helmets, and serfs, in a long procession of carriages, which, beginning at the rock on which Peter the Great's statue stands, reached to the base of the great granite column of Alexander, facing the enormous pile of the Winter Palace.

Tired at last of the procession, I turned aside to one of the largest of the wooden theatres. A clash of music from within announced the commencement of a new performance; joining the torrent of people, old and young, rich and poor, who were jostling for admittance, I at last made my way to the pay-place, where a mob of clamorous moujiks were thrusting out their hands with the admittance-money, in childish impatience.

I drew back to make way for a respectable old grey-bearded merchant and his pretty daughter, who, muffled up in a cloak trimmed with the fur of the silver fox, clung to his arm, and shrank back from the rough gesticulating crowd. I thought I had never seen so charming a girl, so tender in manner, so gentle and spring-like in beauty. The merchant and his daughter bowed and thanked me in broken English for my politeness, paid their money, and passed in.

I followed rapidly, but a crowd of peasants thrust themselves in before me, so that when I took my seat I could obtain no glimpse of the merchant or his pretty daughter.

The wooden theatre of the Katsheli was an enormous building, built, as a peasant next me said, to hold five thousand persons. It had large galleries, balconies, and Corinthian pillars, hung with cheap drapery, and gay with red and blue paint. A vast chandelier lighted up the tent-like interior.

The theatre was already full when I entered, so that I had to content myself with a back seat in an upper box, not far from the head of one of the staircases—as I soon found by the keen-edged iced draught. I amused myself, while the overture was playing, with the motley view before me. The Tartar faces, only partially reclaimed from barbarism, were worth studying, now that they beamed with fun. The little oblique eyes glistened with enjoyment, the great bearded tangled heads rolled about in ecstasy. Here and there, the eye fell on a Polish or Circassian face, with large fine eyes, and almost a Greek contour. Every now and then, a group of grave portly merchants in furred caftans and boots, mingled with the serfs, but with an obtrusive reserve that showed they did so under protest. Their children, also dressed in caftans and boots, were exactly like themselves all but the beards. Nor was there any lack of women of the lower orders: rough, honest, Irish-looking women, few of them in bonnets, most of them with their heads bound round with coloured handkerchiefs.

I did not listen much to the music; it was that brazen mechanical sort of music, without colour or life, that no one listens to. By-and-by, it ended with a jolting crash. There was a moment's pause, and the curtain drew up. A deep hush passed over the troubled waves of the pit. The children clutched their fathers' hands, the soldiers ceased their practical jokes, the countrywomen paused in their gossip, the boys stopped eating, every eye turned to the stage.

An honest old woman just before me—a housekeeper, as I judged by her dress—amused me especially by her child-like eagerness. She put on her spectacles, and leaned forward with both hands on her knees, to drink in every word.

The play was a little operetta, half French, half Italian. I think they called it "Rose and Lubin." It was a gay, trifling thing. The hero and heroine were villagers, and an old cross father, and a malicious fool, were the constant interrupters of their stolen meetings. Rose was dressed in a little tucked up gown of white silk striped with pink, and wore a gipsy hat; Lubin wore a nondescript sort of blue silk coat and flapped waistcoat, while the Zany tumbled into a thousand scrapes in a sort of miller's dress all white, and a blue broad-brimmed hat. There was a good deal of hiding and searching about with soldiers, until the true lover enlists, and finally returns a General, to marry Rose. It was a flimsy pretty bit of nonsense, mixed up with dances and songs, and now and then a chorus; and it was all over in half an hour.

Silly as it was, it pleased the audience, who shouted, laughed, and encored everything. A display of fireworks was to follow, and then a short farce.

Between the acts, I tried the little Russian I knew, and asked the old woman, who had turned round and offered me some honey-cakes, "How she liked it?"

"My little father," she said, quite seriously, "it is the most wonderful thing I have ever beheld since I saw those accursed French act at Moscow, in Napoleon's time."

Suddenly all the clatter and laughter died away. The curtain had not risen, but a faint crimson light was shining behind it. It was the commencement of the pyrotechnic display, and I was curious to see what the Russians could do in these matters. The first scene was to be the illumination of the Kremlin at the coronation of the Emperor Alexander the First. Probably that was only the preparation, for, though the red light widened and glowed, the curtain, strangely enough, did not rise.

The people stamped and shouted. All at once the bajozzo (the clown), in his white dress, ran forward, pale as death, his eyes staring, his hands tossing about like those of a madman. "We are on fire!" he shouted. "Save yourselves, you who can."

"Bravo, Ferrari!" cried the peasants, with roars of laughter. "Excellent! Viva Ferrari! Bravo, Ferrari!"

The clown fled from the stage, as it seemed, in an agony of feigned fear. The laughter redoubled. A man in evening dress rushed forward, whispered to the orchestra, and waved his hand to some men who were not visible to the audience.

The curtain rose swiftly at that ominous signal, and disclosed, to my horror, a rolling mass of fire and crimsoned smoke. Already the

flies had caught fire and were hanging in blazing streamers. Fire rose from below, fire gleamed from above, fire darted its quick tongues from either side. The theatre was on fire. The bajozzo had not been feigning, but was terribly in earnest.

I shall never forget the scream that burst from those four thousand people when the reality broke upon them. I had only an instant to look, but in that instant I saw row after row of white faces turn as by one impulse to the door. Then, came a stamping rush as of a herd of maddened animals. Many tore forward without a thought but of their own safety, others snatched up their children, others dragged forward their old mothers or fathers, or bore their wives or sweethearts in their arms. Then came the grapple for life, the trampling suffocating battle for existence that only served to hasten on death.

In many things I am coward enough, but in sudden danger I have always found myself cool and collected. Perhaps a sailor's frequent hazards, and the constant thought of the possibility of death, is a sort of training; perhaps it is a constitutional quality. I know not how it is. I only state the fact. I saw immediately that though for the moment safe, and far from the full torrent of the struggle, my hopes of escape were quite as desperate as the hopes of those who were trampling each other to death at the entrance below. Unfortunately, one of the great folding-doors opened inward. In the first rush it had been closed, and now the pressure was so great it could not be moved one way or other.

The flames were spreading rapidly, the smoke rolled towards us in blinding clouds, and from those clouds darted and leaped serpent tongues of fire. The flames seemed with cruel greediness to spring from seat to seat. The slips were blazing, the orchestra was a seething pit of fire. The screams and groans on all sides were heart-breaking.

I hesitated for a moment whether to remain where I was and meet death, or to breast the human whirlpool below. At that moment a surge of flame ran along the ledge of the next box to me, blackening and blistering as it went. The heat grew intense. I determined to make one struggle for my life. I ran to the head of the stairs and looked down. There, the herd of screaming shouting people fought with hands and feet in a horrible tangle of life and death.

I gave myself up as lost, when a hand seized my coat. It was the old housekeeper, screaming her entreaties to me to save her. I told her to cling to me and I would do what I could. It gave me courage to think I was struggling for some one besides myself. She kneeled and prayed to God for us both.

I had placed myself at the edge of the crowd in order to husband my strength for a last effort. One thing I determined, and that was that I would not save myself by treading poor women and children under foot. Rather than that, I would let the fire burn me slowly, or I would recommend my soul to God, throw myself into the crater behind me, and so die quickly. One agonising thought alone shot through my heart, and that was a thought for the tender girl I had seen so innocent and happy half an hour before.

Suddenly, as I stood there like a diver hesitating before he plunges, a peasant, scorched and burnt, dashed past me from the crowd that had trampled upon him, and, staggering forward, half-stifled with smoke, fell face downward dead at my feet. His axe, as usual with the peasants, was thrust in his belt behind. A thought of self-preservation, surely sent straight from Heaven, flashed through my brain. I stooped and drew out the axe.

"Make way there, or I cut down the first man who stops me!" I cried out, in broken Russian.

I half fought, half persuaded, a few to give way, until I reached the bottom of the stairs, and had the bare plank wall of the outer enclosure of the theatre before me.

"I will save you all," I cried, "if you will let me free my arm."

The old woman still clung to me, but as I advanced to strike my first blow at the plank partition that arose between life and death, there came a rush which for a moment separated us. I had no time or room to turn, but next moment I felt her grasp still firmer and closer.

One blow, and the splinters flew; a second blow, a plank gave; a third blow, and the blessed daylight poured in on us; a fourth blow, and a chasm yawned, wide enough for the passage of myself and my charge. After us, hundreds passed out rapidly.

I found myself among a crowd of shrieking women, who were calling on an officer standing in a barouche drawn by six horses, to save their husbands, sons, brothers. Suddenly a man with a scorched beard, his eyes streaming with tears, came and took from me the woman I had saved. I was so blinded with smoke and fevered with excitement, that I had scarcely given her a thought. All I knew was, that I had saved an old woman, and, by God's grace, opened a door of escape for some hundreds of otherwise doomed creatures.

When I looked round, I found the merchant whom I had before seen (he was the scorched and weeping man), shedding tears of joy over a beautiful girl who had fainted. The old woman had been divided from me in the tumult. The merchant's daughter it was who had then clasped me—it was her whom I had saved. Beautiful she looked as I bent over her and received her father's blessings.

The tall officer was the emperor. "My children," he kept saying to the mob, "I will save all I can! Bring that brave man to me."

I am not ashamed to repeat those words, though I did not deserve them.

"Englishman," he said to me in French, "the Russian nation owes you a debt of gratitude; it is for me to repay it; come to me to-morrow at the palace."

I bowed my thanks, and handed my card to one of the emperor's staff.

When the fire was subdued, and they began to dig for the bodies, the scene was agonising. Heaps of charred and trampled corpses lay under the smoking beams—some stifled, others trodden or beaten to death. Some were charred, others half roasted, many only burnt in the chest and head, the holiday clothes still bright and gay. In the galleries, women were found suffocated and leaning over the front boxes. In one passage they discovered a crowd of dead, all erect, like so many shadows marshalled from the other world. More than a hundred were found still alive, but dangerously burnt. Most of these afterwards died in the hospitals.

One little boy was discovered cowering unhurt under a bench; he had crept there when the burning roof began to break up and drop among the struggling multitude. The beams and dead bodies had so fallen as to form a shelter over his head, and there he had remained till we disinterred him.

The official returns set down the number of the dead as three hundred; but my agent told me that while he himself stood there, he counted fifty waggons pass, each laden with from ten to fifteen corpses; and many people made a much higher estimate.

I need not say much about my visit to the palace; suffice it to mention that the emperor rewarded me with an order that I highly prize. On the same day the priests offered up public prayers for the souls of the sufferers, on the site of the burnt theatre. It was a solemn spectacle, and as I rose from those prayers, full of gratitude to God for my deliverance, a rough hand grasped mine.

It was the merchant whose daughter I had saved. Tears streamed from his eyes as he embraced me and kissed my forehead and my cheek in the Oriental manner of his nation.

"My little father," he said, "I would rather have found thee than have cleared a thousand red rouble notes. Little Catherine, whom you saved, has been praying for you ever since. Come, you must dine with us. I will take no denial, for do I not owe you more than my life? Come, a droshky there—quick to the Fontanka; Catherine will leap for joy when she sees you."

That visit was an eventful one to me, for on my third voyage from that date I married Catherine Maslovitch, and a loving and devoted wife I found her. She is kissing my cheek as I pen these words.

But it is not to dwell upon my own personal good fortune and happiness, that I have written this plain remembrance. It is, that I may do what little I can to impress upon those who may read it, that a rush from any building on fire is certain to be fatal, and that an orderly departure from it is certain deliverance. The Theatre, Concert-room, Church or Chapel, does not exist, through which a fire could spread so rapidly as to prevent the whole assembly from going out unscathed, if they would go free from panic. The Santiago case was an extremely exceptional one. The whole of the gaudy claptraps were under the management of priests (the worst managers on earth), and what kind of priests they were, may be inferred from the fact that the base cowards all precipitately fled, and that not one of them had the manhood to stand at the Altar, his place of authority, where he could be seen on a platform made to render him conspicuous, and whence his directions would have been issued at an immense advantage. Again, the assemblage was mainly composed of women and children in light inflammable dresses. Again, the Show was lighted by lamps of paraffine dangling by strings from the whole of the roof above the people's heads, which dropped upon them, so many overturned pots of liquid fire, as the strings were burnt. But even under these specially disastrous conditions, great numbers of the assemblage would have been saved but for the mad rush at the door which instantly closed it. Suppose that rush not to have been made, suppose the door wide open, suppose a priest with the soul of a man in him to have stood on the Altar steps, passing the people at that end of the church, out of the Priestly door (of which we hear nothing, and which the last of those quick fugitives perhaps shut after him), and how changed the result! I entreat any one who may read this experience of mine, and may afterwards be in a similar condition, to remember that in my case, and in the Santiago case, numbers lost their lives—*not because the building was on fire, but because there was a desperate rush at the door.* Half a dozen men capable of self-control, might save as many thousand lives, by urging this on a crowd at the critical moment, and by saying "We will go the last."

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BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER VII. WHEN WILLIAM THE FOURTH WAS KING.

THE epoch, there was no denying it, was a wild and dissolute one. The imprint of the Regent's cloven foot had not yet worn away. A man was upon the throne. He made a decorous king enough in his old age, mainly through the influence of a pious and admirable wife; but his youth had been the converse of reputable. The sons of George the Third had not contributed in any great degree to the elevation of the moral tone of the country. The trial of Queen Caroline, and the private life of George the Fourth, had done a good deal towards depraving the national manners. There were no young princesses save one, the Hope of England, whom her good mother kept sedulously aloof from the polluting atmosphere of the age. The Duchess of Kent and her daughter went tranquilly about from watering-place to watering-place, and gathered shells and weeds upon the sands, and visited poor people in their cottages, and sat under evangelical ministers, and allowed the age to go by, and to be as wild and dissolute as it chose. They hoped and waited for better times, and the better times came at last, and have continued, and will endure, we trust.

Party spirit ran high. We had been on the verge of a revolution about Catholic Emancipation, of another about Parliamentary Reform. Everything was disorganised. There were commissions sitting upon everything, with a view to the abrogation of most things. Barristers of seven years' standing, fattened upon the treasures wrung from the sinecurists, and the pension-holders of the old Black Book. Commissioners and inspectors became as great a nuisance and burden to the country as the clerks of the Pipe or the Tellers of the Exchequer had been. Everybody had his theory for regenerating society, but lacked sincere faith in his own nostrums; and so, after a while, deserted them. It was a reign of terror without much blood. The warfare was mostly one of words and principles, abusive language being in vogue among perfectly unscrupulous party-writers. Reverence, gratitude, decency, had gone to sleep for a while. O'Connell called Wellington a "stunted corporal," and Alvanley a "bloated buffoon," and Disraeli the younger "a lineal descendant of the impenitent thief." One Cocking had cast himself into space in a parachute, and, coming into contact with the earth, was smashed to death. A crafty Frenchman lured many hundreds of simpletons into taking tickets for a passage in his navigable balloon or aërial ship. Then, timeously, he ran away, and left them with their tickets, and an empty bag of oiled silk. There were people who did not believe in steam. There were others who did believe in it, but held that locomotives and paddle-steamers were only the precursors of the end of the world. Meanwhile, Chat Moss had been drained by Stephenson, and Brunel was piercing the Thames Tunnel. But nothing was settled. Nobody knew where anything was to end. Steam and scepticism and tractarianism and Murphy's weather almanack, the abolition of slavery and the labour of children in factories, lions and tigers at Drury Lane, and the patents taken away therefrom, and from Covent Garden too; commutation of tithes and reform of municipal corporations, charity commissions and the new Poor-law, chartism, trades-unionism and the unknown tongues; oceans of pamphlets; new clubs starting up all over the West-end; pigtails, knee-breeches and hair-powder beginning to be laughed at; the Chancellor jumping up and down on the woolsack like a parched pea in a fire-shovel, instead of gravely doubting and doubting for years, and working no end of misery and ruin, as Chancellor Eldon had done: all these things, with Irish outrages, colonial discontents and embarrassing relations with foreign powers (order reigned in Warsaw, and "Vivent les Polonais!" in Paris meant the erection of barricades and a tussle between the blouses and the soldiery), made up a chaotic whirlwind of sand and pebbles and brickbats and scraps of paper, the whole accompanied by a prodigious noise, driving peaceably-minded people half blind, and half deaf, and parcel-mad.

Francis Blunt, Esq., and Monsieur Constant, had left Stockwell shortly after eleven o'clock. The hackney-coachman had been well paid, and promised an extra fee for speed; but the era of rapid Hansoms was yet to come, and it was nearly midnight when the two jaded horses that drew

the vehicle clattered over Westminster Bridge. Mr. Blunt felt so exhausted that he was compelled to descend at a tavern on the Surrey side of the bridge and refresh himself with a small glass of brandy. He re-entered the coach, making wry faces, and declaring the liquor abominable. Constant treated the coachman to a glass of ale, but did not presume to accompany his master to the bar of the tavern. He partook, outside, of a moderate sip of his own from a small pocket-flask.

"Why didn't you tell me you had something to drink with you?" said Blunt, pettishly, as he saw his companion replace the flask in a side-pocket.

"I could not venture to ask monsieur——" began the valet, gravely.

"I dare say you couldn't, Constant. You're a sly fox, and always keep the best of the game to yourself. Here, give me the bottle. I have need of a little Dutch courage to-night."

Mr. Blunt took a pretty heavy draught of the Dutch courage, which was, indeed, the very best French cognac. He took a pretty deep draught of it, for a man of such delicately-strung nerves.

"Capital brandy," he murmured, smacking his lips. "You have a talent for buying the best of everything for yourself. Why on earth did you allow me to go into that atrocious gin-palace?"

"It is for monsieur to lead the way."

"And for you constantly and carefully to avoid following me, and to allow me to fall into the lions' den. Constant, do you know what I have to do to-night?"

"To be bold, and to win."

"You have taught me how to manage the one. I think I can depend on my own presence of mind for the other. But do you know how much I want?"

"Monsieur's wants are extensive."

"And so are yours, monsieur the sleeping partner. Egad, unless I rise from the table a winner of five thousand pounds I am a ruined man!"

"Monsieur's creditors indeed are pressing."

"The creditors be hanged," Francis Blunt, Esq., returned, with much equanimity. "It isn't for them I shall have to sit up till five o'clock this morning. But there are debts of honour, Constant, that must be paid. I owe Carlton fifteen hundred. I owe the Italian prince, what's his name?—Marigliano—a monkey. I must send that she-wolf of mine, a hundred pounds before to-morrow afternoon, or she will be crawling after me as usual. And then my ready money is all gone, or nearly so. I don't think I've got fifty pounds in my pocket. I've dropped over sixty pounds at that school at Clapham, Rhodo-something House, to pay for that little brat:—by your advice, Monsieur Jean Baptiste. I tell you, I must have five thousand pounds out of Debonnair before sunrise, or I am done. I must have ready money to go abroad with, and then Dobree has most of my valuables; and then there are your wages, Constant."

"And my commission, if monsieur pleases."

"And your commission, most immaculate of commercial agents. Five per cent, is it not? You go abroad with me, Constant, so that you know I am perfectly safe. By the way, you couldn't manage to take the hundred to the she-wolf to-night, could you?"

"Ready money is not very plentiful," returned the valet, after some consideration; "but I think I can contrive to obtemperate, by a little finessing, to monsieur's demand. Might I, however, ask him to promise me one little thing?"

"What is it, Constant: a rise in your wages?"

"Monsieur's service is sufficiently remunerative," answered the valet, and I believe he spoke with perfect sincerity. "It is not that."

"What then?"

"Not to touch the dice to-night. As an amusement, they are admirable; as a commercial operation, they are destruction."

"Confound the bones, I know they are," Mr. Blunt, with some discomposure, acknowledged. "If I had stuck to the coups you taught me at Vanjohn, I should have made ten thousand this season alone. I never get that infernal box in my hand without coming to grief in some way or other. And yet what money I have won!"

"And what money lost!"

"Your answer is unanswerable. Yes; I will promise you. I will keep my head cool, and won't touch ivory to-night."

"You are going to Crockford's?"

"Must go there, you know. Shan't stop an hour. The only way of luring my pigeon out."

"And then?"

"To the umbrella-shop, of course. The worthy Count Cubford will expect his commission on the transaction, for permission to play Vanjohn in his sanctum. Everybody wants his commission now-a-days. I wonder Langhorne, of the Guards, doesn't ask for fifteen per cent for having introduced me to Debonnair."

"You will be able to afford it if you only follow the instructions I gave you. You—I mean monsieur—must keep his head very cool, and, as much as possible, his eyes fixed on his opponent. Monsieur must never lose his temper, and must never grow tired. Then, if he takes care, and Debonnair is gris enough, he will win his five thousand and more before morning.'

"I believe I shall. Five thousand pounds are more than five thousand louis, most unsophisticated foreigner. Where are we? Oh, Charing-cross. We'll get rid of this ramshackle old tub here. I shall go to the club, have a warm bath, and then——"

"To St. James's-street?"

"No. Gamridge's. After that, the business of the evening will commence. The night is young yet. It isn't a quarter-past twelve."

"I shall therefore have the honour to leave monsieur?"

"Exactly, you will have that honour, most courteous Constant. You may also have the honour of staying out as late as you like on this side of six: for I can't expect to be home before that time; but please sit up for me, that you may know the results of the campaign. It may be an Austerlitz, you know, but it may turn out a Waterloo. Good night. I have no vices to warn you against, for you don't seem to be troubled with any—or else you are up to them all, and keep them very dark indeed."

And so saying, Mr. Blunt waved his hand to his body servant, and strode away in the direction of Pall Mall.

The valet paid the coachman five shillings in excess of his fare, at which jarvey drove away rejoicing. His master had flung him his cloak before leaving, saying that he would put on an overcoat, lighter in texture, at his club. Jean Baptiste Constant enveloped himself in this garment, but did not throw it into any melodramatic folds. It ceased to be the mantle of a Byronic-looking patrician. It was now merely the cloak of a highly accomplished gentleman's valet, who knew his cloak and kept it.

"Yes," murmured Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant very softly to himself, as he walked round the hoarding of those old Mews once occupying the area of Trafalgar-square, but then just in process of demolition, "it may be Austerlitz, and it may be Waterloo—more than Waterloo—it may end in St. Helena and captivity, and death. Ah! je tiens l'enfant. Ah, that dear old nabob at Cutchapore who writes such pretty letters about his little niece. Ah! le beau jeu que le vingt et un. Allons voir la Louve."

It was rather late at night to pay a visit to a she-wolf; but Monsieur Constant seemed bent on the enterprise, and diving into St. Martin's-lane, and through the mazes of Cranbourne-alley, was very soon in Leicester-place, Leicester-square.

CHAPTER VIII. THE HÔTEL RATAPLAN.

I DON'T know what has become of the Hôtel Rataplan in these days. The neighbourhood of "Laycesterre-squarr" is no more exempt from mutability than its Anglo-Saxon vicinage; and Rataplan may have faded into decadence, or undergone an aristocratic change of name, or may have been swept away altogether. It is not a matter of much consequence. I am treating of the year '36; and in '36 the Rataplan flourished exceedingly, and was very much the Hôtel Rataplan indeed.

Désiré Rataplan kept it. He was a gross fat Frenchman. He looked not only a landlord, but a cook; and a capital cook he was. Who lards fat pullets should himself be fat, and Rataplan was larded all over. He was the most unctuous-looking man it is possible to conceive, and his face, like that of many other fat men, was perfectly pale and colourless. The great art of figure-painters is, I have heard, dexterously to represent flesh that has not an adventitious teint basané in immediate juxtaposition with white linen. For this reason the clumsy painters, when they give us a man or woman dressed in white, usually make the flesh swarthy, or sallow, or sanguinolent. Rubens is considered to have been the only painter who really triumphed over the difficulties of chair contre linge. His successors should have come to the Hôtel Rataplan and studied its proprietor. Rataplan was head cook in his own hotel, and wore the orthodox costume of chef. His jacket, his nightcap, his long apron, his duck trousers, his slippers, were all white, and dirty white. His face and hands were dirty white too, and yet the contrast between his lineaments and his habiliments was marked with satisfactory strength. It was the texture, perhaps, that did it. Otherwise, face and garments were identical. He looked like a pierrot who had grown fat. No, he didn't, he looked like what he was—a cook.

Rataplan's countenance was so seamed and pitted with traces of the small-pox, that his cheeks presented a not remote resemblance to one of his own colanders. He had very little hair, and that was grey, and cropped close to his head à la malcontent, and all but concealed under his nightcap. Not a trace of beard or whisker or moustache, did he show. Perhaps the heat of the fire had dried up the capillary forces, or the steam of many saucepans had acted as a depilatory. He was splashed in many places with ancient gravy, giving him the appearance of a blotted skin of parchment. He wore earrings. He had a thin gold ring on his left hand to tongue; and, strange to tell, Rataplan wore over his heart a discoloured red ribbon sewed on the breast of his jacket, and which he declared to be that of the French Legion of Honour.

"Received from the hand of the Emperor himself on the field of Arcis-sur-Aube," he was accustomed to say. "C'est là que nous avons flanqué une raclée à ces canailles d'Autrichiens. Et les Cosaques! hein! c'est Désiré Rataplan qui leur donna à boire et a manger en 1813. Ma parole d'honneur, je les ai accommodés à toutes sauces ces Cosaques."

He declared that he had the cross of the Legion itself, up-stairs in a box. He had not always been a cook. Désiré Rataplan had served in the Grand Army. He had fought at the Beresina. He had been at Leipsic. He only missed Waterloo because the regiment to which he belonged had been stationed behind the Loire. "Et on m'a appelé brigand de la Loire, moi qui vous parle!" he would say.

His regiment, he stated, was the Trente-septième Léger; but this his hearers would obstinately refuse to believe. That a soldier of the Grand Army should become an hotel-keeper,

or a cook, was no such very astonishing thing; but that so corpulent a man should have served in the light infantry exceeded reason and probability. He endeavoured to reconcile assertion with fact, by stating that he had been drum-major to the Thirty-seventh. But his auditors remained obstinately incredulous. As a sapper and miner, as a heavy cuirassier, as a grenadier of the Old Guard, even, they were willing to accept him; but they declined all credence to his ever having been a "light bob."

He appealed to his wife. "Madame Rataplan was my comrade," he would say. "She was cantinière to the Trente-septième. She gave her own tabatière once to the Emperor, when he was out of snuff. Davoust has taken la goutte from her, over and over again. Monsieur le Prince d'Eckmuhl was very partial to Madame Rataplan."

To which, Madame, who was a meek brown little woman, usually habited in a chintz bed-jacket and a petticoat of blue serge, as though she had never had time thoroughly to equip herself in feminine attire after resigning the tunic and pantaloons of a cantinière, would reply: "T'as raison, mon homme. C'est moi-z-aussi qu'a servi le Grand Homme."

They were all frantic in their fanaticism for the memory of the great man. In a dozen rooms of the Hôtel Rataplan, his portrait was hung. There was a plaster statue of him in the hall; an ormolu bust over a clock in the coffee-room. Rataplan would have called his hostelry the Hôtel Napoléon, but for the entreaties of his wife, who represented that the establishment was of so humble a character, that to affix the name of the Great Man to it would be desecration. He did a very comfortable business under the more humble sign of the Hôtel Rataplan, however.

M. Rataplan had two children. Désiré, his son and heir, was away in France, head waiter at Calais, until in the fulness of time it should be his lot to assume the direction of the establishment in Leicester-place. "I should have placed him sous les drapeaux, to serve his country as a soldier," said the paternal Rataplan, "but what is that flag, what is that caricature of the tricolor I see now!

Hélas! soudain tristement il s'écrie:
C'est un drapeau que je ne connais pas.
Ah! si jamais vous vengez la patrie,
Dieu, mes enfants, vous donne un beau trépas!"

He was very fond of quoting Béranger's Vieux Sergent, although he certainly looked much more like the foolish fat scullion in Tristram Shandy, than a relic of the Empire. He had a daughter, Adèle, aged seventeen, whose only duties until she was old enough to be married were, as her parents understood those duties, to keep her eyes cast down, and to divide her time between needlework and the pianoforte. She had a tambour-frame in the office of the hotel, and a pretty little cottage piano in her own little sitting-room; and she played and sewed and kept her eyes cast down, with exemplary assiduity.

Stay! The list of the family is not quite complete. There was a very large poodle dog by the name of Azor, who in youth had been a sprightly animal, capable of going through the martial exercise and performing numerous other tricks, by means of which poodles have ere this won fame and fortune for their masters, on the public stage. But Azor had grown lazy from long possession of the run of his teeth, in such a land of honey as the kitchen of an hotel. Formerly he used to be shaved, but was now allowed to wear the totality of his shaggy coat, so that he resembled a small Polar bear quite as much as a large poodle.

Finally, there was at the Hôtel Rataplan a prodigious old woman, who was called La Mère Thomas. Nobody could tell with precision who she was. Some said she was Rataplan's grandmother. Others, that she was madame's aunt. She was evidently a kinswoman, for she tutoyéd the whole family, called Rataplan mon bichon, and his wife ma biche, and occasionally boxed the ears of Adèle. La Mère Thomas was of immense, but uncertain age. Her complexion was of a fine mahogany colour, and she wore a moustache that might have been envied by many a subaltern in the Life Guards. On her chin, too, there sprouted sundry hairs, which, but for her otherwise jovial appearance, would have given her an uncomfortable family likeness to one of the witches in Macbeth. La Mère Thomas wore a crimson and yellow pocket-handkerchief bound lightly round her head and tied in a bow in front, another silk handkerchief crossed over her ample bosom and tied behind her very much in the style adopted by the engaging damsels resident in the neighbourhood of Ratcliff Highway, a large gold cross at her neck, a skirt of some indescribable fabric and of no colour at all—people said it had originally been a flannel petticoat pieced with a soot-bag—and carpet slippers, like an upholsterer's assistant. She snuffed continually from one of those little tin boxes with a perforated top, like those which are used to keep gentles for fishing in. She was the night porter at the Hôtel Rataplan; and travellers, whom she had let in very late, declared that she habitually smoked a short pipe after two in the morning. Her conversation was not copious. Her English was monosyllabic, and not abundant, although she had been at least ten years in this country. She was a hearty old soul, however, and very fond of beer, which she drank by the quart.

Such was the Rataplan family. They were a good-natured group, all very fond of one another, and quarrelling very seldom: as is the foolish manner with these French people.

The hotel was conducted without the slightest ostentation, but was, nevertheless, a sufficiently prosperous speculation. It was eminently French.

Turning from Leicester-place into the hotel, you might have fancied yourself at once in France—not necessarily in Paris, but in some provincial town. The hall was flagged with the same dirty marble, decorated with the same sham bronzes, and hung with the same array of shrill tinkling bells. The walls were gay with the same highly decorated placards relating to chocolate, corn plasters, bills, elastic corsets, and hotels at Geneva, Lille, Dunkirk—or, continentally elsewhere. There was a little poky office, with pigeon-holes for the lodgers' candlesticks, and numbered plates and hooks for their keys; a green-shaded lamp on the escritoire; limp, green, shagreen-covered registers to keep the accounts in; a long low arm-chair covered with Utrecht velvet, for Mademoiselle Adèle; another, higher and black leather covered, for La Mère Thomas. Madame Rataplan was seldom seen in the upper regions. She was, in fact, head chambermaid, her assistant being a dirty Irish girl, with a face like a kidney potato, and many chilblains, who got on very well with the Rataplans principally for the reason that they were all Roman Catholics. The salle à manger was a long low room, uncarpeted, and the floor beeswaxed; furnished with the usual array of rush-bottomed chairs, the usual litter of half-emptied wine bottles, dingy napkins in dingier bone rings, knives that wouldn't cut, forks lacking their proper complement of prongs, copies of the Siècle and the Charivari seven days old, and a big mezzotint engraving after Horace Vernet, representing Napoleon rising from the Tomb. Everything was very French indeed. Everything was very dear indeed. There was a table d'hôte every day at half-past six, at which the cookery was admirable and the wines were detestable. The hotel was generally full of foreigners. The Rataplan clientèle abroad was extensive; and foreign visitors to England were accustomed to declare that, although the hotel accommodation of perfidious Albion was in general execrable, that offered by the Hôtel Rataplan was passable, mais diablement cher. They did not seem to be aware of the possibility of any hotels existing anywhere in London out of Leicester-place, or at least "Laycesterre-squarr."

Rataplan, then, prospered. He only kept one waiter: a young man from Alençon, named Antoine, with a red head and a face like a fox. This serviteur appeared by day in a waistcoat with black calico sleeves and baggy pantaloons of blue canvas terminating in stocking feet. At table d'hôte time he attired himself in the black tail-coat and white cravat de rigueur, and carried a serviette in lieu of a feather broom under his arm. He was very good natured, and, save on the question of the reckoning, passably honest. He had taught the Irish servant girl to play piquet with him, and, when any of the lodgers wanted a little quiet gambling, Antoine was always ready with a portable roulette box with an ivory ball. He did not appear to cheat until he was found out.

I have forgotten to state that from basement to roof the Hôtel Rataplan smelt very strongly of tobacco-smoke.

SPORT ON THE NAMELESS FJELD.

Talk of laughing-gas! It is nothing to the effect the bracing air of the Norwegian Fjelds has upon the frame. Whether the amount of oxygen one inhales up there, produces a too great wear-and-tear of the system, is a physiological question I don't feel competent to enter upon; but I incline to think the reverse to be the case, when the quantity of carbon assimilated in the shape of provisions is taken into account.

On the Fjelds a man is always hungry. If ever I were reduced to such straits as to be obliged to devour my shooting-boots, in default of better diet, I could do so up there with greater complacency and relish than elsewhere.

I am what is termed an "old hand" in Norway, and have been in the habit of spending my summers there for a number of years; and when I have had my fill of catching salmon, and of eating them (and when the mosquitoes have had their fill of me), I repair to the Fjelds to pay my attentions to the grouse and reindeer. Norway is the safety-valve for all my ailments. Whether it is the air, or the sea-passage, or the "roughing," or the sharp exercise, certain is it, that when I get back to England, I feel better in body and in mind.

This last year, 1863, our party consisted of four. Tents, canteen, rods, dogs, and guns were all packed up, and we had secured berths on the old Scandinavian.

Let us hasten over that horrid North Sea, and pass over all the troubles to which flesh is heir on a rough passage, as quickly as possible. It was as bright a day as you could wish to see, when we found ourselves on board the "Skibladner" at Eidsvold, the southern end of the beautiful Miösen Lake. Of course the first thing we did there, was to light our pipes with some of the "Bedste Tabak subter Solem," otherwise called Petum, costing the respectable sum of not quite tenpence the Norwegian pound.

I take it for granted that the Miösen Lake has been so frequently described, that further remarks on it would be superfluous. So, instead of the scenery, I will devote a few lines to some of our fellow-passengers.

The boat was crowded. St. Hans' Fair in Christiana was just over, and the timber-merchants were returning to their homes from the metropolis. A jolly set of fellows those Bönder were, and, to judge from the quantity of champagne they consumed, I should say, well off. Among our passengers was an English girl, who in company with her elderly parent, was going to fish salmon on the western coast. She wore a felt hat, with a feather stuck in it on one side in the most jaunty manner, and a dark blue yachting jacket with brass buttons and pockets, and a dress of the same material

reaching a little lower than half way down a pair of the neatest legs I ever saw. These dear legs were cased in bright sealing-wax red stockings, shooting boots with brass eyelet-holes, and brass-bound heels. Add to her other charms, that she could "snakke Norsk," and say "Tak," and "Vœr saa god," with the prettiest air imaginable.

As she and I were both bound on the same errand, namely, to kill salmon, we soon entered into conversation. She had never fly-fished before, though she averred she could throw a fly pretty well. I was curious to learn how she had acquired the art.

"I used to get Bob, the gardener's boy," she said, "to stand at a respectable distance, and then I would make casts at him till I could touch almost any button on his waistcoat. When I had practised throwing, long enough, I would cry, "Now, Bob, hook on!' and so Bob fastened the end of his line round a button, and, imagining himself a salmon, rushed off as fast as he could. 'Now, Bob, up stream; now jump!' and then I lower the end of my rod."

"Quite right," I said; "I see you know all about it."

"And then, when we were both fairly out of breath, I would call out, 'Now, Bob, come and be gaffed!' And so ended my morning's practice!"

If there had not been so many spectators, I would have offered my services there and then to act the salmon. I'm sure she could have hooked me easy enough!

There was one old Norwegian on board, and a cynical dog he was. He could speak English pretty well, and seemed rejoiced at having the opportunity of speaking it with a native. The following is the "burthen of his tale" put in better English than he used:

"What a queer lot of fellows you English are," he said, after we had spoken together for a while, "coming all this way to catch fish, and to hunt deer. Besides, you do a wonderful lot of harm to our peasantry."

"How so!" I said. "We pay pretty well for our amusement."

"Much better stay at home," growled my friend. "You are so inconsistent; at one time you overpay, at another you underpay. If some of you are munificent, others are mean and stingy to a degree. Our simple-hearted people can't understand such treatment. You do them as much harm by paying grandly, as by paying meanly."

I could not but acknowledge that there was a truth in his remarks.

"To give you an instance," he added; "last year I met one of your countrymen, and he certainly maintained the character you bear of being a nation of grumblers. At every station at which he stopped, some complaint was entered in the road-book. Now 'he had been kept waiting ten minutes for horses,' or 'he had been charged an exorbitant price for a cup of coffee,' or 'the station-master was an extortionate rascal.' Of course, all these remarks were Hebrew to the individual denounced, but perhaps they were intended for the benefit of future English travellers. But I was glad to see, on returning by the same route, that some others of your countrymen had felt disgusted at his remarks, for I found at one place, entered below one of his complaints, 'This old grumbler ought to have remained at home;' and at another, 'I have to complain that I found no toothpicks at this station;' and 'Mr. —— does not seem to have enjoyed his trip overmuch.'"

"I rather think I know the man you mean," I said.

But now the boat had arrived at Lillehammer, so bidding adieu to our friends, we hastened up to the inn. Early next morning we started for our fishing quarters, where we remained three weeks, meeting with fair success, at the end of which we found ourselves only too glad to go up to what I shall call Nameless Fjeld, where I had had a small shooting-box knocked up. I purposely omit the name of the Fjeld, as I have a great desire to keep this bit of ground to myself. Pardonable selfishness!

It is not my purpose to enter into a detailed account of our manner of living up there. Nor how we feasted like princes on trout, char, ryper, venison, cloud-berries and cream from a neighbouring 'Sœter;' neither will I recount all our sporting adventures, and how Bogus *would* spend all his time in going after an imaginary bear, which of course he never saw, and which, I believe, nobody ever did see; I will merely recount the deeds of September 4th: a day ever memorable in the sporting annals of Nameless Fjeld.

It was our custom to divide our forces so that only two went out reindeer hunting, while the others remained near home, to pay their attentions to the ryper and ptarmigan, and to catch trout and char, with which the small tarns and "becks" abounded. This day it was Bogus's turn to go reindeer hunting with me. It was as lovely a morning as ever hunter saw, when we left our quarters at four in the morning. We bent our steps to a part of the Fjeld where the other two had seen a large herd of deer the day before, but had been unable to get near them.

After a long and tedious walk, halting every few minutes to sweep the horizon with our glasses, we arrived at the spot where we expected to find them. Not a horn could we see. But there were signs that there had been a large number there only very recently, for we could see where they had been cropping the Alpine ranunculus, their favourite "bonne-bouche." The dog began to sniff about, and, after satisfying himself that there was nothing close by, seemed as if he caught scent of them at a long distance. The boy who accompanied us held him lightly in leash, and we determined to follow him in any direction he might choose. We walked on, perhaps for an hour, when all at once we detected the herd at about three English miles distant.

We could see them quite plainly through our glasses, and counted more than a hundred,

some of them splendid large fellows. As bad luck would have it, there was a large extent of marshy ground to cross before we could get near them. Over this we wormed ourselves along, snake fashion, mostly creeping, but occasionally taking advantage of some huge boulder behind which we could stand up erect with impunity—no small relief after crawling for a couple of hours.

I had calculated we must be within two hundred yards, but when we came to look for them not one of them was to be seen.

"Fine sport this," growled Bogus, in a suppressed tone, and looking savage.

"Glad you think so," was growled back in return, while I was still sweeping the horizon with my glass. "By Jove! there they are! Close beneath us, all lying down. One, two, three. Down! Keep that dog quiet; that old buck smells mischief. Well, they are having their siesta, so I vote we have our 'elevens,' as the servants say at home. We will wait till they get up." The basket was unpacked. I had gone back a little way to get a drink from a clear stream that came bubbling down the Fjeld side, and was stooping down to have a good pull at it, when crack went Bogus's rifle. "Confound the fellow!" I thought, "there's the result of keeping the hammer down; there's an end of our sport." But there he was, standing up and yelling like a mad Indian. Crack went the other barrel. In vain I looked round to see the deer on my flank. But as he was loading again, I hurried up to him. While I had been gone something had startled the animals, he said, and they had suddenly got up. Of course it was absurd to wait for me, so he had taken aim at the nearest buck and fired. He felt sure he had hit, but the smoke had blown back into his eyes, and prevented him from seeing.

"But what made you shriek in that insane manner?" I asked.

"Oh, that was a dodge old 'Ole,' my hunter in Valders, taught me—at all events, it succeeded, for they all stopped as if terrified, and I know I hit with my second barrel."

"Well! let us see."

At about one hundred and seventy yards from where we had stood, we found two deer lying dead, side by side. The conical bullet had gone through the heart of the first, and pierced the neck of the second, which now lay gasping in the agonies of death.

"Hollo," I cried, "you're in luck to-day—there's another deer lying dead there on your right."

And so there was; his second bullet had also brought down a deer. Three deer in two shots.

"Well! I had better get off home with the lad and send a horse back to take home the quarry, while you remain to flay them," said Bogus the triumphant, after a pull at the flask.

So off he went with the boy, while I proceeded to my task after the most approved fashion. But it was beginning to get late, and a storm was brewing: so after waiting and waiting, I determined to try and find my way home as well as I could. Piling up stones over the venison, to protect it from the foxes and gluttons, which would otherwise have devoured it, horns and all, I set off, singing, "Tilfjelds! tilfjelds! hvor den vilde Ren,"—I got no further. Talk of old Scratch, and he is sure to appear. There was a fine old buck not more than fifty yards off. He was standing quite alone; for, late in the season, it is usual for the large bucks to separate from the main herd. I raised my rifle and let fly.

"Meget godt skudt," cried a voice, as the beast gave a salto mortale and fell dead. The man had arrived with the horse, and had witnessed the operation. So, returning to where the other three lay, we placed them on the pony's back, and again started home.

It seemed as if I was destined to have sport that day; for, on descending into a dell, three more deer slowly trotted across my path at a distance of sixty paces. Again did the original savage nature take possession of me, and my rifle covered the leading buck nicely. But—and I have never since regretted it—a feeling came over me that we had committed enough havoc for one day, so I stoically threw up my gun, to the infinite disgust of my companion, who cursed and swore as a Norwegian peasant only can.

It was one in the morning when we arrived at home. I had had nothing to eat all day, for Bogus had forgotten to leave me the provision-bag, so, as may be imagined, I had a ravenous appetite.

"Why, old fellow," said he, "we thought you were lost, and as the trout were nicely done, it was a pity to spoil them by waiting for you in vain."

"Always thoughtful!" I replied; "but make yourself useful for once, and get me something to eat, if you don't wish me to begin on you. Then for a pipe, and the grog. And then I'll tell you all about it." And I recounted to them my adventures, as I have done here, and I put a white mark against Sept. 4 in my journal.

MY ACCOUNT WITH HER MAJESTY.

I NEVER laid by a penny till the Post-office Savings-banks came up. Not that I mightn't have done so, for I earned good wages, and after paying all the expenses at home, I had always plenty of loose cash to spend. I was never without money in my pocket; but always at the year's end I had spent all I had received. I knew very well that I might have saved a good bit, without cutting down the weekly allowance to the missus for the house, or stinting myself of any reasonable enjoyment; but I had never begun the thing, and when I thought about doing it, I was at a loss how to go about it. What I used to do, when I had a little lump of money over and above the expenses, was to put it away in a drawer, and lock it up; and I used to say to myself, "I won't touch that money, but I'll put more to it from time to time, and

when it amounts to a hundred, I'll do something with it—put it in the bank, or invest it in a building society, or something of that sort." But, somehow, the money didn't grow as I expected. You see, I always had the key of that drawer in my pocket, and at any time, if I ran a little short, through being rather free with my mates or going upon the spree, I had nothing to do but go to the drawer and help myself. I hesitated over it sometimes, but never for long; the drawer was so handy, and I used to say to myself, "If I take a sovereign it won't reduce the money much, and I can put it back again next week. But it generally happened when next week came that it wasn't convenient to put the money back. And so I went on going to the drawer for sovereigns and half-sovereigns, until the bit of money dwindled down so low that it wasn't worth keeping. It's the same with drink. If you make up your mind that you won't taste a drop for a week, and stick to it, you are all right; but only be persuaded to make a beginning—to take one glass, just one, and you take another and another, and then it's all wrong. It's the same, too, I dare say, with swindling and robbing your master: once make a beginning, and on you go, like rolling down One-Tree-hill on Whit-Monday, the further you go, the faster you go.

Susan used to say to me, "George, how's the money getting on?" And she used to say it in a sly, sarcastic sort of way, meaning that I was spending it, and that it was going very fast. I know it was, but I didn't like to acknowledge it, and always said: "Oh! it's all right in the drawer, there, what's of it." "Well, George," she would say, "you put away ten pounds about a month ago, and as Christmas is coming on, it will enable us to buy all we require, and give a little party to our friends." "Yes," I would say, "but you know, my dear, that I have had to pay So-and-so, and So-and-so;" and then I'd name certain bills, and the subscription to my lodge —for I'm an Odd Fellow—and add it up and subtract it from the ten, and Susan, not being good at figures, would be quite puzzled, and give the sum up in despair. But she found me out more than once. One day, when I came home to dinner, she says to me, "George," she says, "you left the key of the drawer on the mantelshelf this morning." She didn't look at me, but went on carving the boiled rabbit. My wife is odd that way, and not like the generality of women. Nagging is not one of her faults. She doesn't say much, but she thinks the more. So, when she told me about the key in that quiet way, I knew she had been to the drawer and counted the money. That's where I don't hold with Bluebeard. He might have tried his wife with anything but a secret; it is downright unreasonable to expect a woman not to be curious. I merely said "Oh!" in an indifferent kind of a way; but I am sure my looks convicted me. However, Susan did not make any remark about the money being nearly all gone, but, by-and-by, when she was helping me to a suety dumpling, she says in her usual demure way, "Don't you think, George, it would be a good thing to put a little money away in the savings-bank?" "Well," I says, "it wouldn't be a bad thing, Susan." "No," she says, "I'm sure it wouldn't, and if I was you I would make a beginning." "Well," I says, "I would, if I knew how to go about it." "There's no difficulty about that," Susan says; "you've only to go to Welbeck-street, and put a little in, and they'll give you a book, and there you are." "Very well, Susan," I says, "I'll take your advice, and go to Welbeck-street to-morrow."

I was as good as my word, and next day, at the dinner-hour, I walked up to Welbeck-street to put in three pound ten, which was all that was left of the fifteen. But, lo and behold! when I got to the bank it was shut, and for the moment I thought it had broke, or the manager bolted with the funds, or something; but on looking about I noticed a brass-plate on the wall with information about the bank hours, and from that I learned that the bank was only open three days a week, from ten to two in the morning, and from six to eight in the evening. I had come on the wrong day. I was a good bit vexed to have all my trouble for my pains, but Susan, when I told her, took it quite quiet, and says, "Never mind, George, you can go again on Saturday, when the bank is open." Well, I fully resolved to go, and on Saturday morning I took the money with me, intending to walk over to the bank after my work. However, just as I was leaving the shop at six o'clock, who should I meet but an old mate of mine, that I hadn't seen for years. Nothing would do for Dave but I must go and have a glass with him. Well, you know, you can't refuse to drink with a mate, especially when he's been away in Birmingham for ever so long, and got a holiday on purpose to come up and see his friends. So in we goes to the Yorkshire Grey and has a glass of rum-and-water each, and you know how the time slips away when old friends meet as have been long parted. Dave had so much to tell me about Birmingham gun-barrels, and I had so much to tell Dave about Clerkenwell watch-springs, and one thing followed another, including glasses of rum-and-water, that it was a quarter to eight in no time. It was no use; I couldn't get to Welbeck-street in a quarter of an hour unless I took a cab, and it didn't seem natural like to take a cab to go to a savings-bank with three pound ten: so I stopped with Dave and had another glass.

When I went home and told Susan, she didn't say an angry word, but just remarked that I was very unlucky. You don't know how aggravating Susan is in that way. I'd rather have tongue-pie a good deal, than that sit-and-say-nothing, but think-the-more way of hers. It's more aggravating than saying the thing right out; for you can't tell what an awful character a quiet woman *thinks* you are. For my part, I'd rather have teacups. However, I was resolved to show Susan that I was in

earnest, and on the following Tuesday I got to the bank in good time. I didn't find it such an easy matter though, to put my money away, even now when I was there with it in my hand. There was such a lot of people in the bank that there was no getting near the counter for full a quarter of an hour, and when at last I did get to it, the clerks didn't seem inclined to take any notice of me. Two or three times I said to one of them that I wanted to put in three pound ten, but he paid no attention, and always turned to somebody else. An old woman with half-a-crown cut me out first, and then I was elbowed aside by a charity-boy with a shilling all in coppers. They were regular customers, and used to the banking business, I suppose, and I wasn't. However, I got it in at last and received my book, and I do assure you I felt a load taken off my mind. When I showed the book to Susan, she said, "That's right, George, and I hope you'll go on with it." I fully intended to do so then; but it's easy to intend, and not so easy to carry your intendings out. It's like sitting over a fire on a winter's night, and saying, "I'll get up early to-morrow morning and do overtime;" but when the morning comes, and you peep out between the clothes and see the frost upon the windows, it's very easy to find an excuse for lying a little longer.

The evening song and the morning song don't often agree. So it was with my saving. I had always a pretty lively recollection of the trouble it was to walk all the way to Welbeck-street after my day's work, and then to have to push my way through a crowd of old women, and wait my turn at the counter. It's not worth doing for a few shillings, I used to say to myself; I'll wait until there's more of it, and then put it in in a lump. So I put the shillings away in the drawer until such time as they should grow to be pounds; but owing to the key being always handy they didn't, and what with club-nights and sprees now and then, it never came to be enough to be worth while taking down to Welbeck-street. When Christmas-time came, all I had in the bank was the three pounds ten I first put in. However, that was something, and as I was rather short just then, it would come in handy to get the Christmas extras. Three days before Christmas I went down to the bank to draw the money out, promising Susan to come straight home with it. You may judge how mad I was, when the clerk told me that I couldn't draw the money out without giving a week's notice. Here was a pretty go; Susan at home waiting for the money to get in the tea and sugar, the plums and currants, and what not, and the cash not to be got until after Christmas. "This sort of saving won't suit me," says I to myself; "there's too much ceremony about it." I had to borrow the money from one of my mates to get the Christmas dinner, and at the end of the week I drew my money out of Welbeck-street, and paid him back; and that was the end of my account at that savings-bank.

Next year, Susan belonged to a pudding-club at the grocer's, and I belonged to a goose-club at the Yorkshire Grey. We began to pay in sixpence a week very shortly after Midsummer, and, a few days before Christmas, Susan brought home a parcel of groceries, and I got a goose, and a bottle of gin, and a bottle of rum. We didn't miss the money paid every week in sixpences, and when the things came home, they seemed like a gift. I said to Susan that I thought this was better than putting money in the savings-bank, where there was so much ceremony, and Susan thought so too. But when Susan's brother, John, who is a cashier at a large linendraper's, came to dinner on Christmas-day, and we told him how we had been saving, he burst out a-laughing. "What are you laughing at?" I says. "What am I laughing at?" he says, almost choking himself with a mouthful of goose—"why, at you." "What for," I says. "For being so jolly green," he says. "Jolly green!" I says; "is it jolly green to lay by money for a rainy day?—leastways, for Christmas-day, when a family requires extras?" "Fiddlesticks!" John says. "Let me ask you a question, George." "Twenty," I says; "go ahead, John." "Well," he says, "when did you begin to pay into the goose-club at the Yorkshire Grey?" "At Midsummer," I says. "And you paid in sixpence every week for twenty-six weeks?" "Yes," I says, "I did." "Which made thirteen shillings, George?" "Exactly," I says. "Well," he says, "is the goose and the liquor worth it?" "Judge for yourself, John," I says. "Could I have bought such a goose as that you are now partaking of for less than eight-and-six in the shops?" "No," he says, "I don't think you could." "Very well," I says, "where's your fiddlesticks, and how do you make me out jolly green?" "Why this way, George," he says: "in the first place, you've been losing the interest upon your money for six months." "That's not much," I says. "No," he says, "perhaps not; but that's not all. I'll be bound to say, George, if you'll only be candid enough to confess it, that every time you went to the Yorkshire Grey to pay in sixpence to the goose-club, you had a glass of something?" "I don't deny it," I says; "you can't well go to a public-house without having a glass." "Sometimes two," he says. "Well," I says, "sometimes two; perhaps three, when I happened to meet a friend." "Then, let us say, George, that every time you went to pay in sixpence to the club, you spent, on an average, another sixpence on drink." "It might be about that," I says. "Very well then, George, upon your own showing, your goose, and bottle of gin, and bottle of rum, have cost you six-and-twenty shillings, to say nothing of your loss of time, and the injury to your constitution through drinking more than was good for you." "I never thought of it in that way, John," I says. "No, of course not, George," he says; "for if you had thought of it in that way, you wouldn't have been such a fool as to do it." "But you'll admit," I says, "that Susan has

had her money's-worth at the grocer's, and not paid more than she ought?" "I'm not going to dispute that," he says; "but you must remember that the grocer has had the use of her money, and supposing he had failed about the beginning of December, what would have become of Susan, and all the other Christmas-club geese? I'm surprised at a sensible man like you, George, doing such things, when there's a Post-office Savings-bank close to your door." "But," I says, "there's so much ceremony about savings-banks; they're only open certain days a week, and the hours are inconvenient for a working man, and——" "You don't know anything about them, George," he says, taking me up short; "for the Post-office Savings-banks that have just come up are open every day from ten to four, and you may put money in, and draw it out, whenever you like." "Well, John," I says, "I'll see about it."

I did see about it, and found that one of the Post-office banks had been opened at Bardsley's, the tea-grocer's, in the next street. Bardsley's is our post-office and money-order office as well; and walking up the shop through an avenue of sugar-loaves, I found a clerk reading the newspaper.

"I want to put some money in the new bank," I says.

The clerk never said a word, but placed a printed paper before me to sign. I read it over and signed it, thereby declaring that I was not directly or indirectly entitled to any deposit in that, or any other savings-bank, and that I submitted myself to the rules of the Post-office Savings-bank. The clerk then handed me a small paper book, about the size of a penny memorandum-book, only it had a white cover with the royal arms at the top, and was printed all over with rules and regulations.

"Sign your name on that line, across the inside of the cover," the clerk says. I signed it. "That's your signature," he says, "for drawing out, and you should be particular always to use the same one."

I then handed the clerk five shillings as my first deposit. He took the money, wrote in the book, "Number 857. 1862. Jan. 1. — —5," put the post-office letter stamp for the day against the entry, and the thing was done. I don't think I was more than five minutes in the shop altogether. The very next evening, when Susan and I were sitting at supper, the postman came to the door. Susan answered him, and came back with a letter in her hand. "Lor', George," she says, "it's a letter, 'On Her Majesty's Service;' whatever can it be about? I shouldn't wonder if it was the water-rates, for you know the man has called three times, and——"

"There, let's open it," I says, "that's the best way to find out what it's about. It's all right, Susan," I says; "it's a letter from the Postmaster-General." "And whatever does *he* want?" Susan says. "Oh, nothing," I says; "he only writes to say that five shillings have been placed to my credit in the books of his department." "Well, it's very condescending of him," Susan says, "for so little." "Well," I says, "it's a guarantee that it's all right, and there's his signature, 'Geo. Chetwynd.'" "Cheatwind!" Susan says; "are you sure it's all safe, George?" "Safe as the bank," I says, "and safer; for the Queen, the two Houses of Parliament, and all the taxes, are security."

I quite took a fancy to the Post-office Savings-bank when I found how simple the machinery was. It was almost as handy as the drawer, to have a bank round the corner where you could buy your tea and sugar, and put your money away all at once, and without ceremony. I was as pleased with it as a child with a pretty toy, and I liked the importance of receiving letters every now and then "On Her Majesty's Service." Susan used to put the letters on the chimney-piece for people to see. It was soon the talk of the neighbourhood that I was holding a correspondence with the government, and it was reported that I was going to be appointed watchmaker to the Queen and the royal family. I passed the post-office twice every day on coming home to dinner and going back again to work, and to walk in with my book and put away a few shillings, was just like dropping in to the public-house to have a glass of ale. And always the next day, whether it was pounds or shillings, I had a letter "On Her Majesty's Service;" and Susan would meet me at the door and say, "George, here's another letter from the Queen," and then we'd sit down after supper and count it up, and see how much I had at my banker's. I found putting money away in the Post-office Savings-bank so easy and so pleasant like, that I rather overdid the thing, and put more money away than I could spare. So one day I ran short, and had to draw out. It was almost as easy and expeditious as drawing a cheque upon one of the big banks. At the post-office they gave me a slip of paper with a form of withdrawal upon it, and addressed in print to the Postmaster-General on the back. I had nothing to do but fill in the number of my book, the amount I wanted to draw out, sign my name, double the bit of paper up, and shove it in the post. It only took me about a minute, for the paper was ready gummed for sealing, and no stamp was required, it being marked on the back, "On Her Majesty's Service." It was two o'clock on Tuesday when I posted the letter. At four o'clock next day I had an answer in the shape of a printed form, very similar to the notice paper. I had nothing to do but sign it and present it at the post-office, and the money was handed to me, the clerk marking off the withdrawal in my book.

It's my belief that saving is a habit, like smoking, or taking snuff, or like extravagance. If you begin it and go on with it for a little time, you come to have a sort of passion for it. Whenever I had any spare cash, I was off to Bardsley's with it, and often when I thought of withdrawing some I didn't do it, saying to myself, "Oh, I can give notice to-morrow, or the next day, or any time I like;" and so perhaps I

waited and tided over the temporary difficulty, and didn't withdraw at all.

About the beginning of December, in 'Sixty-three, when I went to put in three pounds, the clerk wouldn't take it. "What's up," I says; "going to stop?" "No," he says; "but if you look at the rules and regulations in your book, you'll find that you ain't allowed to put in more than thirty pounds a year." That, I believe, is to protect the regular bankers, and it may be quite right, but I don't exactly see it. I know this, that before the new year, when I might begin to put in again, I had blewed that three pound which the clerk wouldn't take. If it did any good to the regular bankers, it certainly didn't do any good to me. However, at the end of 'sixty-three, I had fifty pounds at the Post-office Savings-bank, and I might have had sixty, only I took a holiday in August, and went down with Susan for a week to Margate, where we were rather free. And here I found out another advantage of this wonderful Post-office bank. Susan and I went boating, and raffling, and driving in chaises, and ran short, and were likely to be in a fix, until I looked over the rules and regulations in my bank-book, when I learned that I might withdraw my money at any Post-office Savings-bank in the kingdom, by giving notice to that effect. So I sent up the usual notice of withdrawal to London—I keep a dozen of them stitched together in a cover, and call it my cheque-book—stating that I wanted to withdraw the money at the post-office at Margate; and, almost by return, back came the withdrawal paper, and I had nothing to do but go to the post-office and get it cashed. And the forms don't cost you a farthing; there's no postage to pay, and when the time comes for you to send up your book to the chief office in London for the interest at two and a half per cent to be calculated and added to your account—which is the anniversary of the day on which the first deposit was made—the Postmaster-General sends you a big envelope for the purpose.

Altogether, it's the best regulated thing I ever came across, and if it doesn't make people save, nothing will. But it does, I'm sure. Look at Bardsley's shop now, to what it was. Why, that little box with the pigeon-hole, where they used to do the post-office order business, has swollen into a great banking department, and there's Bardsley himself, with a clerk to help him, at it all day long, with piles of bank-notes and bowls full of sovereigns beside them—just like Twining's, or the Bank of England itself. Bardsley's proud of it, too; I know he is. He's never behind the counter now, serving tea and sugar; he leaves that to his young men; he's a banker, bless you.

I don't believe I should ever have saved anything if these Post-office Savings-banks hadn't come up; and I'm sure if it was generally known how handy and convenient they are, thousands like myself would take advantage of them, and soon learn to be careful and provident. If there's a philanthropist that's hard up for an object, I don't know what he could do better than go about distributing tracts setting forth the rules and regulations and advantages of the Post-office Savings-banks.

AMONG PIRATES.

My friend Michael Andersen, late carpenter of that ill-fated bark the Flowery Land, is a man of few words. These being, for the most part, Norwegian, he has a certain difficulty in making his sentiments clearly intelligible to the British mind, and this difficulty is enhanced by the effect produced upon the poor fellow's nervous system, both by the murderous scenes he has witnessed, and his subsequent compulsory association of three weeks with the piratical gang who had murdered the captain and others, and seized the ship. Nevertheless, in the course of an hour's visit he lately paid me, with reference to obtaining a passage back to Christiansand, Michael related enough to make his experience worth recording in the "story of our lives from year to year."

It is no exaggeration to say that, for the whole period I have mentioned—three weeks—the man's life hung upon a hair. In his condensed evidence given at the recent trial, Andersen stated that while standing at the top of the cuddy-stairs, and bending over the mangled body of the mate, he was himself struck with a handspike on the back of the neck. This blow, which struck him half senseless down the steps, a fall of six feet, was no doubt intended to have been deadly. Lighting upon the neck and shoulder, it only occasioned him a few days' stiffness and pain, and warned him of the critical tenure on which he retained his life.

There seems to have been little general intercourse among the polyglot crew, but, fortunately for Andersen, he had established a sort of friendship with one of the Manilla miscreants—Lyons—who ultimately came forth as the leading spirit of the murderous conspiracy. To this man's persistent interposition, Andersen, the second mate, and the boy Early, were unquestionably indebted for their lives.

Of these three, my friend Michael stood in the most imminent peril. The second mate was needed to navigate the vessel. The boy—a reserved and timid lad—was held in contempt. No carpenter was needed, and the very appearance of poor Andersen at any part of the ship gave such umbrage to the mutineers, that, in spite of the opposition of his friend "Joe Lyons," as he called him, no day passed without its being resolved to kill him before its close. So long as "Joe Lyons" was present, Michael was comparatively safe. The ticklish part of it was to survive during his patron's unavoidable disappearances. To facilitate this process, the latter imparted every day to his friend a regular lesson in deportment, suggested by the existing

feeling of each individual miscreant respecting him.

"Keep clear of Lopez, *this* watch," Lyons would say; "if Santos or Marsalino speaks to you, don't look so cursedly sulky; *they're* all right just now. Fling that knife overboard, you (something'd) booby! Do you want it in your own ribs? Now, mind this; if you see Blanco lounging about you with his hands in his pockets, sheer wide of him, d'ye hear? Don't go below for a moment to-day; they don't like it. Keep out of all dark places, and, when I'm on deck, take your snooze."

Such—though not conveyed in that precise language—were some of the directions Michael had daily to observe, and were sent well home to his memory by the supplementary information his instructor had almost always to add—that his life was to be taken that day, should the slightest pretext be afforded, and that even the manner of the deed, by knife, handspike, slung shot, or flinging overboard, had been decided on.

With wits sharpened by this intelligence, Michael did, under a merciful Providence, weather the dangerous storm: preserved, as we know, to aid materially in the conviction of the merciless band, even of him who saved him; but whose conduct, with this exception, unhappily, presented no other feature of extenuation.

According to Michael, this deed of piracy and murder—one of the foulest in our annals—had its origin solely in cupidity. The vessel, a well-found bark, of about five hundred tons, had more than the usual number of hands on board. The crew were all, with one or two exceptions, practised seamen, who knew their duty, and, in spite of the variety of languages, did it well.

The unfortunate captain, Michael declared, "was a very nice man." So also was the captain's brother, who had been a master carpenter, and in whose employ Michael had purposed to remain, at Singapore.

There was, according to Michael, little or no ground for discontent on board—some occasional harshness of expression on the part of the captain not being worth taking into account—but an impression had got about among the men that the ship's freight included a quantity of specie. It appears to have been a fact that the captain had with him certain bags of medals, or metal counters, burnished to look like sovereigns, and worth about a penny each. The sale of these impostors, in many parts of the metropolis, but especially near the river, is so common as to run no risk of deceiving the most innocent purchaser. Nevertheless, to their unlucky presence in the "Flowery Land," was probably due the catastrophe which befel that unfortunate ship.

Poor Michael, after all his dangers and escapes—not to mention the assistance he afforded in bringing the criminals to justice—ran some risk of perishing by starvation in liberal England. He was indeed paid for his attendance as a witness; and, while so engaged, was provided with a lodging at the house of a policeman; but, the trial over, he was turned adrift; and had it not been for the refuge offered by the Sailors' Home, and the kindness of a charitable gentleman who was present at the trial, would have been left in a state of actual destitution: his clothes, money, box of tools, &c., having gone down with the scuttled ship. As the vessel was insured for four or five thousand pounds, it might have been imagined that the owners would have taken the poor man's case into their consideration.

Narrow as Michael Andersen's escape has been, it was even surpassed in narrowness by that of a gentleman—Mr. S.—to whom a most extraordinary adventure occurred about twenty-five years since, but which, never finding a place in the Annual or other registers of the time, may scarcely be remembered.

Mr. S., who had held an appointment in India, and married, while there, a half-caste Malay lady of great beauty, embarked with his wife at Singapore, on board a large country ship of eleven or twelve hundred tons burden. In the same vessel were placed a large number of Chinese convicts, going to fulfil their respective sentences at different depôts. Now, instead of providing for these desperadoes a regular escort, it pleased the authorities to assemble a sort of "scratch" pack, composed of Sepoys, pensioned and returning home, and of men who *had* been policemen, but who no longer were.

They had been but a few days at sea, when Mr. S. was awakened one night by a disturbance on deck, and, rushing up, found a regular battle going on between the convicts (who had risen) and their inefficient guard: apparently to the disadvantage of the latter. Mr. S. quickly returned to his cabin, and was groping for his arms, when the captain rushed in, fired his pistol through the skylight, and crying out that the Chinese were masters of the ship, darted up the steps, threw himself overboard, and was drowned.

A few minutes of suspense followed, when a party of convicts came below, and, without molesting Mrs. S., ordered her husband on deck. Compelled to obey, he found the deck deluged with blood, and the victorious convicts compelling the survivors of the British crew and Sepoys to "walk the plank."

Presently, it came to Mr. S.'s turn. Instead, however, of falling at once into the sea, he, with great muscular efforts, clung to the plank, and refused his fate. In vain the murderers tried to prod him with pikes. He dodged their points successfully, until, at length, a Chinese, creeping forward on the plank, aimed a blow at him with a sabre. In avoiding the stroke, Mr. S. lost his hold, and fell into the sea.

It was midnight, the sea was full of sharks, Mr. S. could not swim a stroke, the ship was in complete possession of the convicts, a thousand miles from land. Could any position seem more hopeless? Yet Mr. S. lived to relate the story

at a London dinner-party to a friend of the writer's.

In falling, he caught a rope towing overboard. By this he hung, invisible, hearing successive victims fall, and distinguishing between the dead and living bodies, by the absence, in the former case, of the last frantic struggle for existence. At length, his chilled fingers lost hold of the rope; but, at that instant, it occurred to him that he had heard it affirmed that if one who could not swim would only throw himself boldly on his back, keeping his head well down, he might float for an indefinite period. He did so, and floated; but every now and then his legs would sink lower and lower, till at length one of them struck a hard substance. Strange as it may appear, it is a positive fact that he had unconsciously drifted into one of the ship's boats, which, half submerged, was towing astern. Once aware of his position, he was able to support himself without difficulty till morning broke, when he was discovered, brought on deck, and, to his utter astonishment, allowed to go to his cabin unmolested; not, however, until he had seen the unfortunate English mate, who had taken refuge in the rigging, brought down, hamstrung, and left to bleed to death.

The ship was now put about; and, under the charge of a native pilot, who had been spared for the purpose, shaped her course for China. Mr. S. was confined to his cabin, and though, naturally, a prey to considerable anxiety, was relieved from any immediate fear of death, inasmuch as one or other of his captors came every day to inquire what he would like for dinner!

In due time land was sighted, a bold headland, round which the pilot declared they must steer, although there presently appeared also a broad fine channel, dividing the headland from the mainland. In spite of the man's repeated assurance that this was full of rocks, the Chinese, doubting his good faith, compelled him to lay what seemed to them the shorter course and enter the channel. Scarcely had they done so when the ship stranded. A hasty council was held, at which it was resolved that half the party should escape to land, sending back the boats for the other half, who should then follow their comrades, having first murdered Mr. and Mrs. S., and fired the ship.

The former part of the programme was duly executed, and the boats were returning, when the three masts of a British sloop of war became visible, not a mile distant. She had seen the course of the devoted ship, and, knowing what must ensue, gave chase to pick up the pieces. Her boats were already out, and no sooner came within hail than Mr. S. made known the state of affairs. In a moment, the Chinese were on their knees praying for their prisoners' intercession. The sloop's boats, properly armed, went ashore and captured every individual of those who had landed. The whole were reconveyed to Singapore, and probably not the least remarkable feature of the remarkable story is, that for some reason best known to themselves, the jury could not be induced to award against the actors in that cruel deed of piracy and murder any other verdict than "manslaughter!"

FAIR DENMARK.

Most people have their Ultima Thule on the map, beyond which all is shadowy twilight, terræ incognitæ, peopled by ichthyophagi, anthropophagi, or "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders." "Spain's an island," said one of the lights of the harem. To the general reader, as well as to the general traveller, Denmark, as a whole, is an unknown region, beginning with its entrance-hall (by land), the Duchy of Holstein.

The portal to the Danish kingdom for visitors from Western Europe (still by land) is Hamburg, a city unique after its kind—a Babel without its tower, a Babylon without its fall. Other towns and other provinces have bowed their heads to monarchic sceptres; Hamburg retains its ancient constitution and its privileges as a free city. Its bourgomaster still bears the title of magnificent, and its senators have a right to be addressed as their wisdoms. Amidst the confusion of tongues which stuns the ear, the language of trade is universally understood; "money" is the password from one end of the town to the other. The Hamburgian babies learn to lisp it soon after they come into the world, the old men mutter it in their dreams before lying down to take their final sleep. They are prudent, and would give offence to no man. Once upon a time, a journalist had the boldness to state that French gunpowder was better than Prussian. The censor of the press struck out the sentence, seeing that Prussia cannot be supposed to be, in any respect, inferior to France. Another writer translated a speech of the King of Sweden, in which he mentioned Asiatic cholera. The word "Asiatic" had to be suppressed, because Russia might take umbrage at it. Despite all which, the men of Hamburg are honourable, amiable, hospitable, and will honour a letter of introduction as readily as a bill of exchange.

Almost touching Hamburg, is Altona, the capital of Holstein, the second city of the Danish dominions, and the dullest in the universe. It rivals London, nevertheless, in having a handsome street called Pallmail. The scenery of Holstein, without aspiring to the picturesque, is pleasing in its character. The farms, with their neat hedges or low stone fences, have almost an English look. Gentle knolls occur now and then, interspersed with little sheets of water. The clumps of beech around these small lakes are vocal with the nightingale. In general, there is little wood; but wherever it occurs, from its consisting of trees with glossy foliage, it tells well in the landscape.

In fact, the land is a very good land. The neatness of its little towns is very striking. Of these, Braunsted and Neumunster are worthy of especial mention. With their pavements as

accurate as mosaic, houses of bright compact brick, avenues of elms forming sheltered walks from end to end, and streets delightfully clean, they greatly remind the traveller of the highly-polished little towns of Holland.

The system pursued in filling up vacant clerical charges is, as nearly as can be, that of uncontrolled popular election The parishioners meet at the church on a day of which due intimation has been given by the ecclesiastical judicatory of the district. The only inhabitants of the parish who do not attend on these occasions are the proprietors of the larger estates; they absent themselves lest they should be suspected of influencing their tenants in behalf of some particular preacher. The candidates are generally those young clergymen of the neighbourhood with whose pulpit ministrations the people are best acquainted. The names of these being duly proposed, every male parishioner who has received the sacrament votes for the person he prefers, and the appointment is given to him who unites the greatest number of voices. The system appears to work well, there. There are few instances of serious divisions among the people, and as few in which the best qualified candidate is not selected.

Pretty little Kiel, in a snug baylet on the north coast of Holstein, receives, if not its vitality, at least a great part of its animation, from the fresh blood which flows through it in the shape of strangers. The steamers arriving from Copenhagen import objects of constant interest. Faces are seen in its peaceable streets which nobody has ever seen before, and dialects are heard whose interpretation would puzzle its learned university: which university, by the way, includes imprisonment amongst its modes of discipline. He is no myth, that travelling student of dramatic notoriety, who, when asked by country acquaintances where he resided, frankly gave his address, "at the University Prison, Heidelberg."

But Kiel is best known to German idlers from its attractions as a watering-place, notwithstanding the rivals it has to contend with. Cuxhaven, Nordeuei, and Heligoland. But though these rivals stand on the North Sea, whose waters are reckoned more restorative than those of the Baltic, yet Kiel attracts a fair proportion of the thousands who annually flock from all parts of Germany to some other part of Fatherland.

Holstein, for its present annoyance, is the joint which unites to the great German body the long straggling arm known as Continental Denmark. The little duchy, hitherto best known for its agricultural fame, holds also a conspicuous place in the annals of the royal houses of Europe. Its princely line has given kings to most of the thrones of the north, and if they all begin to squabble about it, there is no knowing where the quarrel will end. A different supply consists of cart-horses, the Holstein breed maintaining its reputation as amongst the fittest for draught in the world. The dairies are also in high repute. There are farms in the neighbourhood of Kiel where a couple of hundred cows are kept, and in whose storerooms a thousand cheeses, ready for export, may be seen at one time. Though Kiel is somewhat sunk from its importance as the capital of the Gottorp portion of Holstein (formerly belonging to the imperial family of Russia), yet, in consequence of a brisk commerce and some manufacturing spirit, the inhabitants have long been reputed wealthy.

On doubling the Point of Falster, after leaving Kiel, the steamer takes you between Zealand and an archipelago of islands scattered about on either side — poor little islets scarcely rising above the water's edge, covered with scanty grass and a few hovels, whose peasant inhabitants lead a life much akin to that passed on shipboard. The wind dashes the spray of the waves against their huts. The sea roars by day around the family table, and by night beneath the pillows on which they sleep. The sea is their element, their delight, and their sorrow, their wide world, their boundary. Casting their nets therein, they reap their harvests.

It is a popular tradition that some of these islets were made by enchanters, who wished for greater facilities of going to and fro, and dropped them in the sea as stations on their way. At certain spots they are so close to each other that the sea no longer resembles a sea, but a mighty river like the Rhine. You distinguish the shore on either side; you can count the dwellings; and on Sundays, when the boat runs along the coast of Falster, you can hear the bells, and can respond to the hymns chanted inside the churches.

A little further on, the natives will take you to the prow of the vessel and point with pride to a tall white mass of rock surmounted by several sharp peaks, and crowned with trees. What a geologist would call calcareous rock, is not a rock, but a beautiful young fairy who reigns over the island and its surrounding waters. The naked cliff is her white robe, which falls in graceful folds to the sea, and is diapered by the glancing sunbeams. The pointed pyramid is her sceptre, and the belt of wood her diadem. From the summit of the Dronnings Stol (the Queen's Seat), she surveys her empire and protects the fisherman's barque as watchfully as the merchant vessel. Thus does the popular imagination poetise material objects. Passing along the shores of a lake, it hears the water-sprites singing in their grottos, and beholds the mermaids rising to the surface. Gazing at a hill of chalk, it discovers a queen there, and calls it the Moensklint (the Maiden's Rock). At Moensklint the sea resumes its open character, and the coast of Kiöge almost seems to retreat, to make way for the vessels which incessantly pass. Thence to Copenhagen the sea is covered with ships. Here, as elsewhere, the Baltic coast is full of traditions, some impressed with true religious feeling, others bearing the trace of paganism.

In these islets everybody is acquainted with the history of elves and giants, with magic swords, and treasures guarded by dragons. They are the resort

of mermen, with green beards and hair like seaweed streaming over their shoulders, who sing at evening amongst the breakers to entice the maidens, and bear them off to their crystal grots. They hide sorcerers who, by force of enchantments, raise tempests to wreck the boats of the fishermen, against whom they bear a grudge. They have ghastly huntsmen, condemned for their crimes to an endless chase through thicket and marsh. Priest Island recals a saintly legend. There dwelt on it a priest named Anders, revered by every one on account of his virtues. He was very poor, being possessed of one penny only. But when he wanted anything, he sent his penny to the dealer or the labourer, who invariably and devoutly returned it, with the addition of the thing required. The island still retains its name, but has, unfortunately, lost the marvellous penny.

At another part of the coast, a church sunk to the bottom of the sea, after being profaned by impious men. By night, you may hear the unhappy wretches chant the penitential psalms, intermingled with sobs and wailings. When the sea is calm, you may see through the transparent waves the lighted candles before the altar. For their sins, they are condemned to bitter imprisonment in this sunken church until the day of judgment.

In the same neighbourhood, the sailors have often beheld, in the midst of tempests and by the glare of lightning, a strange built vessel hoisting an unknown flag. The captain and his crew one day committed a great crime; and they are to wander over the waves, without halt or repose, till the end of the world. When these poor maritime wandering Jews perceive another vessel at a distance, they send off to it letters for their relations and friends. But the letters are addressed to persons who have not existed for centuries, and to streets with names known to no living creature.

In Falster Island there was once a very rich woman who had no children. Wishing to devote her fortune to pious uses, she built a church, which, when finished, appeared in her eyes so beautiful, that she felt herself entitled to ask a recompense. She therefore prayed to be permitted to live as long as her church should stand. Her desire was granted. Death passed before her door without entering it. He knocked at the doors of all her relations and friends, but did not show her so much as the tip of his scythe. She lived unscathed through all the wars, through all the plagues and pestilences, through all the famines which ravaged her country. She lived so long, that she had nobody left to talk with; for she always talked of such ancient times and ways that nobody could understand her. But when she asked for extension of life, she forgot to ask for a continuation of youth and middle age. She received what she begged for and no more. She grew older and older. She lost her strength, her sight, her hearing, and her speech. She then had herself shut up in an oaken coffer and carried to the church. Once a year, at Christmas, she recovers the use of her senses for an hour, and every year, at that hour, the priest approaches her to take her orders. She then half uprises in her oaken chest, and asks, "Is my church still standing?" "Yes," replies the priest. "Would to Heaven," she answers, "it had fallen to the ground!" She then sinks back with a deep sigh, and the lid of the coffer is closed again.

A poor sailor, who lost his son in a shipwreck, went mad for grief. Every day he gets into his boat and sails away to the open sea. There, he rolls a drum with all his might, and calls to his son in a loud voice, "Come, come; come out of your hiding-place! Swim hither, and I will put you beside me in my boat. If you are dead, I will give you a grave in the cemetery, a grave among the shrubs and flowers. You will sleep better there than beneath the waves." But he calls and looks out in vain. At nightfall he returns, saying, "To-morrow, I will go further; my poor boy did not hear me."

Most of these legends are melancholy in their character, and turn upon the different phases of family affection. For instance: Dyring went to a distant island and took a handsome girl to wife. They lived together seven years, and she presented him with seven children. Then death came into the country, and carried off the wife, so fresh and so rosy. Dyring went to a distant island, married another girl, and brought her home. But this one was unkind and hard-hearted. When she entered her husband's house, the seven children wept; they wept and were anxious. She repulsed them with her foot. She gave them neither beer nor bread, and told them, "You shall sleep on straw, with nothing to cover you." She extinguished the great torches, and said, "You shall remain in darkness."

The children wept very late into the night. Their mother heard them, where she lay, under the earth. "Oh!" she cried, "that I could go and see my little children!" She prayed and prayed till she obtained permission to go and see her little children, on condition that, at cock-crow, she would leave them. So the poor mother raised herself on her weary legs, and climbed over the stone wall of the burial-ground. She traversed the village, and the dogs howled as they heard her pass. She reached the door of her former dwelling; her eldest daughter was standing there.

"What are you doing here, my child?" she asked. "How are your brothers and sisters?"

"You are a fine grand lady, but you are not my darling mother. My mother's cheeks were white and red, whilst you are as pale as death."

"And how can I be white and red, after reposing so long in my coffin?"

She went into the chamber; her little children were there with tears on their cheeks. She took one and combed it, smoothed the hair of another, and caressed a third and a fourth. She took the fifth in her arms and opened her bosom to it. Then, calling her eldest daughter, "Go and tell Dyring to come here," she said. When Dyring came, she spoke to him angrily. "I left you beer and bread, and my children are

hungry and thirsty. I left you blue cushions and coverlids, and my children sleep on naked straw. I left you tall flambeaux, and my children are in darkness. If you often make me thus return by night, misfortune will come of it." At this the mother-in-law exclaimed, "Henceforward I will be kind to your children." And from that day, whenever the husband and wife heard the dogs growl, they gave the children beer and bread; and when they heard them howl and bark, they went and hid themselves, lest they should see the dead woman come back again.

The Kæmpeviser are songs and stories written in the national language of Denmark. They contain, amongst others, the touching history of Queen Dagmar (Aurora, or Daybreak), who, for seven years, was adored by the king and his people, and who died in May, 1212. Her arrival in Denmark is thus related:

King Valdemar and his noble, Strange Ebbeson, are sitting in the castle hall, and are discoursing together.

"Do you hear, noble Ebbeson, what I tell you? You will set out for Bohemia, from whence you will bring me back my young bride."

Noble Ebbeson, of handsome mien and eloquent speech, replied, "If I go to Bohemia, who will accompany me?"

"Choose first," replied the king, "the young Lord Limbek and Olaf Glück; choose the rich Seigneur Peter Glob and others, according to your liking."

At their departure, the king accompanied them to the shore with a numerous and brilliant suite. For three weeks they sailed over the azure waves, and when they caught sight of the land of Bohemia they gaily saluted it. They cast anchor, furled their sails, and landed. The retinue was dazzling to behold, preceded by the noble Ebbeson.

"God be with you, King of Bohemia! You are a prince worthy of all honour. King Valdemar of Denmark sends me to you; he loves your daughter, and demands her hand."

The king then entered his palace to consult with the queen. "There are some noble seigneurs from Denmark, who are come to take our daughter away. If mighty Valdemar desires to espouse her, we will leave her to these brilliant lords, and give a rich dowry with her hand."

They dressed the princess in blue silk and led her into the great hall. "Here is the princess herself, so beautiful in modesty and virtue." They then brought the chess-board and the table of massive gold, that the noble Ebbeson might play with the princess and converse with her alone. At the third move they were agreed; noble Ebbeson had won a good wife for his king. The silken carpets were spread on the ground, and a long train accompanied the princess to the place of embarkation. She bade adieu to her dear parents, and they blessed her from a distance. She was gentle and delicate. She arrived by the island of Manöe, to the west of Schleswig. The King of Denmark made his horse prance on the shore of Ripen.

"Noble Ebbeson," asked the princess, "before we land, tell me who is that bold cavalier who rides to and fro along the bank?"

"You are welcome, princess," replied Ebbeson; "but do not speak so loud. It is King Valdemar of Denmark, come to offer three crowns to his bride."

"Shame on you, noble Ebbeson! Have you deceived me? Has King Valdemar of Denmark only one eye?"

"King Valdemar is a hero worthy of the blood of Orlog; he has reconquered for Denmark all the land to the north of the Elbe. Such glory must needs be purchased by something."

The wedding was brilliant, and the young couple loved each other from the bottom of their hearts. It was a happy time for all in Denmark. Queen Dagmar took care of the honest peasant; he lived without burthen, and in peace. She was the sweetest flower in Denmark's garden.

DR. PEREGRINE'S PAGE.

I.

In one of the earlier volumes of my diary I find the following passage:

"Tuesday, January 17th, 18—. This morning, at half-past three A.M., poor John Bentmore expired. Conscious to the last—full of self-condemnation for errors which were more those of judgment than intention; pious, earnest, humble-minded, he died, bitterly accusing himself of having injured his boy's prospects. A touching end. I promised to befriend his child. How shall I fulfil that promise?"

Of all my humble protégés, John Bentmore was the most grateful, and the least satisfactory. He was emphatically an unlucky man. Nothing prospered with him. He had tried everything. Service in all sorts of capacities. He had been a greengrocer, a lodging-house keeper; a traveller for a wine merchant; a traveller in the grocery line; foreman to an upholsterer. I got up a subscription for him, and fitted him out for Australia; but in less than two years he was back again, with little besides the clothes which, to use his own expression, he stood upright in. By-and-by he set up for himself in the upholstery trade with capital borrowed from one of his old employers. He had been brought up to it, his father having been an upholsterer; and he ought to have understood it himself. But his ill luck, or rather his want of business habits, pursued him still. He employed the best men; he bought the best materials. Yet, his wood always warped; his blinds never worked properly; his carpets wore white; his very nails never held. He was wont to admit himself with a sigh, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow, that "there was a many complaints. He didn't know how it was, but there was a many complaints."

At last he sunk under his ill fortune. On his death-bed he accused himself bitterly, and bewailed the destitute state of his son, whose future prospects naturally formed his chief anxiety. I had much ado to reconcile him to the idea of the boy's seeking his living (at any

rate in the first instance) by servitude, and I undertook, before I sought a service for Arthur, to induce Mr. Moreen, the upholsterer—with whom John Bentmore had lived twice as foreman—to employ him; but John's hopes on this head were slight. "He won't do it, sir," he said, with a sigh of self-reproach; "and I don't deserve that he should. He's a just man—Mr. Moreen. And I—I owe him money. I owe him a large sum of money, and he's not one to overlook that. If indeed he would let the boy work for him any number of years without wages, and so pay him off what I owe, that would be a blessed thing! but he won't do it! he won't do it, sir. I have enraged him; and Mrs. Moreen—she can't overlook his having lent me the money; not but what it would be the best thing they could do to get paid; for Arthur would do his duty by them, I'm sure of that. He's very different from me, you see, sir—a deal better. He's got twenty times my head for figures, and book-keeping, and that. He'll make a first-rate man of business, will Arthur. They say at his school, that he's an uncommon turn for mathematics. It *is* a pity, ain't it, to make a menial of such a lad as that?"

And the father looked proudly and fondly at his boy, who was seated in the hospital window intent upon a book; and a single tear rolled down upon his pillow.

The hour came at last. He fixed on his boy a glance of loving recognition, and the tender light faded away; in its place there came a film, and all was over.

II.

Arthur Bentmore had not completed his thirteenth year when his father died. He was tall for his age, with small and well-cut features. The mouth was full and handsome; but the compressed lips, and square chin, indicated firmness, whilst the singularly prominent eyes had in them a thoughtful abstraction unusual in one so young. I had learnt from Mr. Gillies, his schoolmaster (whom I had met more than once by his father's bedside), that he was studious and persevering, though not particularly clever; and from the father himself, that he was dutiful and obedient in no ordinary degree. But my own observations had served rather to puzzle than to enlighten me, although at one conclusion I *had* arrived, namely, that he was reserved even to secretiveness. His nature seemed to be one of those which, to open at all, must be wrenched open.

His father's affairs were set in order with as little delay as possible. When all was sold, scarcely enough remained to pay the funeral and other necessary expenses; nothing whatever towards defraying Mr. Moreen's debt. I had clothed the boy in decent mourning, and paid his small arrears of schooling myself, taking him for the moment into my own lodging; and now I felt it was time to think of putting him in some way of earning an independent livelihood; but it was not without the utmost difficulty and considerable exercise of patience, that I wrung from him the confession that he would rather be an upholsterer than a servant.

I took him to Mr. Moreen, whom I had long been in the habit of attending professionally, and who I believed had a real regard for me. I would make an attempt in that quarter. After all, it could but fail.

Mr. Moreen was a huge, sturdy, ruddy-faced giant, working hard, living generously, doing business, as business should be done, in a business-like way. He piqued himself on the quality of his materials, and the excellence of his workmanship, and was wont to look with an eye of something like contempt on any work but his own. Though as straightforward, shrewd, and experienced a tradesman as London ever produced, he was completely under the thumb of his wife. He came down to us now, from the comfortable meat tea he had been enjoying with Mrs. M. (as he respectfully called her) and the children, wiping the crumbs from his mouth as he entered. He smiled on seeing me; but cast a sharp glance of something like disfavour on my companion; who, pale and slender, looked above his station in his new mourning suit, relieved by an inch or two of his father's gold chain, that peeped from his waistcoat. I said it had been his late foreman's last wish that his son should be brought up to the trade he had followed himself, and that he had not been without hope that Mr. Moreen would permit the boy to be in his shop, at least for a while.

The upholsterer heard me attentively to the end. He was not one to speak hastily, nor yet one to mince matters when he did speak. He knew his own mind, in general—when Mrs. M. was not by.

"Sir, I wouldn't have a son of John Bentmore's in my shop, not if you was to pay me all he owed, and fifty pounds more to the back of that. I've had enough of the father; I don't want no more of the lot. That boy'll be just like 'em all—turn out as bad as the rest. John Bentmore used me ill, sir. I trusted him, and he deceived me. He deceived me."

"Not wilfully!" I interrupted. "When he borrowed that money, he intended to repay it."

"I trusted him, and he deceived me," Mr. Moreen resumed, not condescending to notice my interruption. "He promised in black and white, that he would pay back that money before the year were out, and he never paid me a shilling of it—no, nor meant to it. There's no honesty in the blood, that's where it is! there's no honesty in the blood! Eighty-seven pounds nine shillings and threepence that man owed me, and I shall never see a farthing of it. No, sir, I thank *you;* but I'll have nothing to do with his boy."

"Father would have tried to pay you, if he had lived, sir!" Arthur's young voice was heard to say; "I know he would have done his best to pay you."

I glanced at the boy. He was pale, and the perspiration stood in beads upon his forehead. His eyes, full of an eager and glowing light, were fixed intently on the upholsterer. My heart bled for him. It was cruel to speak thus of his dead father in his presence.

"Not he!" Mr. Moreen replied, putting his hands into his waistcoat-pockets, and jingling his loose silver, with a dogged kind of carelessness. "Not he! 'twasn't in him. 'Twasn't in *him*, no more than 'twas in his brother Charles, who died some eight or nine years ago, deep in debt. He was another of the same sort—always borrowing, never paying nobody again—always in trouble and difficulties—and *prison* (with a strong emphasis). It's in the blood. There's no backbone among them! And the boy's one of them. *Of* course!"

He jerked out these sentences with strong contempt, making short pauses between each, that seemed to add tenfold weight to his words.

I felt indignant at the cruelty of such remarks, before a lad whose parent was scarcely yet cold in his grave. "Mr. Moreen," I said, "you have a perfect right to refuse to employ the lad, but you have no right to wound him, by casting bitter reflections on the memory of his father."

"Sir," said Mr. Moreen, taking one square brawny hand out of his pocket, and stretching it towards me with a gesture of power, "I speak as I find. You forget as I've boys myself—a many boys."

He heaved a sigh, that seemed to come from some cavernous depths, and made a kind of draught in the shop. "I've no less than five of 'em, and Mrs. M. expecting again in October. Sir, them boys look to me to be fed and clothed, and put in the way of feeding and clothing their own selves. I've enough to do for *them*. They're brought up strict, and honest, and hard, *they* are—not taught to give themselves airs—not dressed like young Eton gents. What *they* wears is paid for, honest and reg'lar. I should scorn to borrow money for *my* boys."

He turned away, and bending a little forward, seemed to be examining a piece of old oak furniture that stood near. But his thoughts were evidently not with that. A moment afterwards he resumed in a somewhat deprecating tone, as though willing to justify himself to me. "You see, sir, I've had little comfort since the day when that money was borrowed. Mrs. M., she'll never overlook it. Nev-er overlook it. Not if she lives to a hundred. She has her ideas, has Mrs. M., and her opinions. Strong. She was always against lending of it. Many a time she says to me, says she, 'Mark my words, M. Don't you trust that Bentmore—he's a slippery fellow.' If you please, sir," said Mr. Moreen, suddenly taking his hands from his pockets, and changing his tone to one of uncommon briskness, by way of changing the subject, "if you please, sir, we'll say no more about it. Only I won't have nothing to do with his lad."

And so we parted.

III.

A page's place was soon found for Arthur Bentmore; and a good one. One of my patients willingly engaged him, inexperienced as he was, after hearing the particulars of his story from me. Admiral and Mrs. Sullivan were kindly, liberal people, living alone, spoiling their servants, as they would have spoilt their children if they had had any, laying themselves out to be imposed upon in a hundred ways, on all sides. Their butler, Mr. Tapps, having decanted their wine, and imbibed the greater part of it, for two-and-twenty years, was looked upon by them as a priceless treasure. Their coachman, a corpulent but lenient man, allowed them the use of their horses for an hour or two occasionally, when his wife thought it good for him to drive; nor was there a pair in all London that could match his for sleek and decorous slowness. The lady's-maid had ruled her mistress with a yard measure of iron for thirty years, and was looked upon by that lady with a truly filial respect. The cook had grown fat on the proceeds of that which she sold out of her luxurious kitchen. The housemaid and scullery-maid might as yet be considered babies in the service, having been only three and four years in the family; but, influenced by the general tone of the establishment, they were of course prepared to remain there (if spared, and not taken possession of by the baker or the greengrocer) half a century at least. Every one of the domestics spoke of the house, and all it contained, as theirs. It was "our plate," "our carriage," "our dinner-parties," "our uniforms," "our court dresses," and "our diamonds."

The first thing done by the treasure, Mr. Tapps, on the new page being respectfully presented to him by his mistress in my presence, was to alter his cognomen to that of Jeames. He could not be expected to call him any other. Of course not. Jeames were the proper name for a page, and had been ever since he were a page himself. "And if you does as I tell you," said Mr. Tapps, with dignified emphasis, turning to the ci-devant Arthur, and mingling encouragement with the stern dignity of office, "if you does as I tell you, and minds nothing nor nobody else, you'll do well enough in time, I des-say."

During the page's probation, the reports of his conduct were excellent. Mrs. Sullivan had nothing to say but in his praise. Tapps, the treasure, spoke highly of him. Tapps was entirely satisfied. He had broken wonderfully little crockery for a raw lad in his first service, and there was a marked improvement in his double knocks.

I was sitting one morning in my consulting-room, having just dismissed the last of my gratuitous patients, when my page (I called him my page, from having put a guiding hand to his destiny) called upon me. He looked thin and ill, and paler even than usual.

"Nothing wrong, I hope?" I said, thinking that the boy grew too fast, and that he ought to be well nourished, and not overworked.

"Nothing, sir. I came to speak to you on a little matter that——"

He paused.

"What is it?"

"Well, sir, I came to ask you—that is (correcting himself, as though he had not been sufficiently respectful)—I made bold to come and ask you, if you would kindly take care of this money for me, sir?"

He took from his waistcoat-pocket something wrapped in a piece of old newspaper, opened it, and spread it on the table. There were three half-crowns, one shilling, a sixpence, and threepence in coppers. That amount was also set down on a little square of white paper, in clear figures, which I supposed to be his.

"Certainly," I said. "I will keep this for you, if you wish it. What is it for?"

He was silent.

"Is it for any particular object?"

"Well—yes, sir,"

"Perhaps you would rather not tell me?"

He considered a moment, and then answered that "It is towards paying that debt."

"That debt! What debt?"

"Father's debt to Mr. Moreen, you know, sir. Father owed him eighty-seven pounds nine shillings and threepence," he said.

I looked at the little heap of money on the table, and involuntarily smiled.

"My good boy, you don't hope that you can pay such a sum as that?"

"I mean to pay it, sir."

"You may mean to pay it, and it shows an honesty of intention that I cannot too highly commend; but you can't pay it, my boy. Nor would Mr. Moreen dream of expecting you to do so. It would take a lifetime of service to pay off such a debt as that. Let me see. What are your wages?"

"Eight guineas a year, sir, two suits of livery, and one working suit, one hat, and eighteenpence a week for beer."

"Tell me what put this idea into your head?"

"Mr. Moreen, sir."

"Mr. Moreen! Have you seen him, then?"

"No, sir; not again; but you remember, sir, he said that——" The boy paused, and taking a step forward, added very low, as though what he was about to utter was too dreadful to be spoken aloud—"that there was no honesty in the blood—*no honesty in the blood*, sir!"

I felt a greater interest in him at that moment than I had ever done before. It was evident to me now, that the boy had strong and deep feelings, though from some cause he never gave them expression.

"Now, don't let those words rankle in your mind, Arthur," I said, kindly, laying my hand upon his thin shoulder; "Mr. Moreen was angry when he said that, and not without cause, as you know; for your father—well! Your father did him an injury. People say things when they're angry, that they don't hold to afterwards. We all do."

"Mr. Moreen *will* hold to it. He believes it, sir. He said we were a bad lot, all of us. He said I should turn out as bad as the rest. He said there was no honesty in the blood."

The boy still spoke low, but with rapid utterance, and as though he had repeated those words again and again to himself scores of times.

"Take back this money," I said. "I will answer for it that Mr. Moreen would wish you to do so. I know him better than you do; and I am certain that the last thing he would dream of doing, would be to take the little earnings of a poor lad like you."

"I can't take back that money, sir."

There was a pause.

"Shall I ask Mr. Moreen to consent to receive it, as a proof of your honest desire to pay what is owed?"

He became excited immediately.

"Oh pray! *pray* don't do that, sir! I shall be sorry I told you at all, if you do. Pray keep it for me, sir; just as it is. Only keep it for the present, and say nothing to him—nothing to him."

He seemed to lay the matter so much to heart, that, after a few more ineffectual remonstrances, I consented to humour him. So I sealed up the money in his presence, writing on the outside that it was a deposit of Arthur Bentmore's.

I did not forget to tell Mrs. Sullivan that I was less satisfied with her page's looks, than she was with his conduct; that he was growing too rapidly, and was more emaciated than I liked to see. He should be generously fed, and above all, not be stinted in his sleep. She agreed with me as to the alteration of his looks;—said she had herself felt uneasy about it; had intended to consult me in the matter; and summoned The Treasure to our conference.

Tapps had volumes to say on the subject: no boy, especially a growing boy, couldn't expect to be strong, that didn't take kindly to his beer; which Jeames, he never had from the first. Jeames was a strange boy. There was no knowing where to have him. He never took a drop o' beer from one month's end to another, didn't Jeames! Why not, Dr. Peregrine would ask? which of course—why not? Why! he actually preferred water! But some was like that; and a great misfortune too. It wasn't for the saving neither. Jeames was a strange party. In fact, Mr. Tapps had never known but one other like him—and *he* was a very strange party indeed.

Time passed on; and I felt so entirely at ease about the boy—so satisfied that he would now do well without any help of mine—that I troubled myself but little about him. He had been out of town with the family, and had grown so tall, that he overtopped Mr. Tapps; a liberty which must have seemed strange to the well regulated mind of that individual. His mistress had been obliged to promote him from buttons to a regular livery; and in the social intercourse of the servants' hall, he was now "our footman." Thus satisfactorily closed his second year of service; but with the opening of the third, came the startling intelligence that he was "leaving to better himself!"

I did not attend Lady Fetherstone, Arthur's new mistress, and, therefore, saw less of him than before; although I did occasionally catch a glimpse of him on the box of his lady's old-fashioned barouche, during my professional progresses: till at length the closed shutters of her ladyship's house in Bumption-street, indicated that she, her companion, her lapdog, and the rest of the establishment, had adjourned for the autumn to Tunbridge Wells.

IV.

One morning in the following June I was awoke at about half-past six o'clock, by a peculiarly sharp ring at my professional door-bell. I had been up all night with a patient in dangerous circumstances, and had scarcely been asleep a couple of hours; but I could not be insensible to the shrill urgency of that appeal. I was wide awake in a moment. There was a short pause, a muttered colloquy between my housemaid and some one else; she knocked at my door (I slept on the ground floor), and, opening it, showed a pale and startled countenance.

"Sir! sir!" she said, in hurried tones, "Arthur Bentmore is come for you directly—a dreadful thing! the butler at Lady Fetherstone's has destroyed himself!"

I was soon at the scene of the catastrophe. I found a policeman already there in charge of the body, and, perceiving at once that life had been extinct some hours, I lost no time in going up to the lady. She had recovered from her swoon, but was in a fearful state of nervous excitement, and for some time it was unsafe to leave her; for the shock seemed to have partially unsettled her reason. After a while, however, the remedies I employed began to produce the desired effect, and I had the satisfaction of seeing her at last gradually sinking to sleep, with her hand clasped in that of Arthur's former mistress, Mrs. Sullivan.

The scene in that house was a shocking one to witness. The mother and sister of the suicide hung over his mangled remains with tears and groans of anguish; whilst the servants of the establishment, distracted at the tragical end of one with whom they had lived in daily companionship, were totally unable to afford them any comfort.

The cause of the catastrophe was soon but too clear. The misguided man was known to have been long in the habit of betting; and it came out, through a friend who had chanced to call at the house, unaware of what had happened, that he had lost so large a sum the previous day at the Derby, as to make it easy to understand that he dared not face the ruin such a debt must bring upon him.

I was in and out of Lady Fetherstone's house constantly that day. Her staunch friends, Admiral and Mrs. Sullivan, insisted upon it. Thus I had ample opportunity of observing the conduct of Arthur, under circumstances not a little trying to one so young. Of all the inmates of that house, he was the only one who seemed to retain composure, or common sense. Nothing tends to re-settle nerves that have been unusually excited—especially servants' nerves—so much as the sight of a calm and matter-of-fact attention to the small duties of life. Mrs. Cook began by taking no notice of what Jeames was about, and continuing her spasmodic heavings and groanings; but after a little she could not resist watching to see how he did what she ought to have been doing: from watching she got to correction and advice; and finally she condescendingly approached, and began to rectify his errors. When I entered the kitchen to prescribe for her—having been informed by the under housemaid that she was at the point of death—I found her with a very red face, in the midst of an animated argument with Jeames as to the proper management of gravy.

When the latter was interrogated as to the butler's habits of life, some curious particulars came out. It appeared that the man never did anything in the house except wait at table, and occasionally open the door in the absence of the footman. He was very rarely at home; often spending entire nights out, and returning about six in the morning, when he was always let in by Arthur, who, summer and winter, rose at five. When pressed as to his own reasons for rising so early, he hesitated at first; but at length replied that he always occupied himself about his own affairs before six o'clock, when he considered his day's work for the family ought to begin. Did his mistress know of her butler's proceedings? He could not say. Mr. Jacobs (the butler) had a key of the house door. He had mentioned to him that he did not wish to have this spoken of, as it might occasion unpleasantness; and he should be sorry to lose the convenience.

Was *he* aware of Mr. Jacobs's practice of betting? He was. Had he ever been induced himself to do the like? No answer; and the question was, after a little discussion, withdrawn. Had he had any suspicion of the butler's losses at Epsom? He had had.

But, in spite of the quiet and self-possessed manner in which Arthur had given his evidence, and its undoubted truthfulness, there was yet something about him which (although I should have been at a loss to define it) occasioned in my mind not only an uncomfortable impression that he knew much more than he chose to divulge of the butler's affairs, but that he was also, to a certain extent, a participator in the practice that had led to so fearful a result. I could hardly explain, even to myself, why I was convinced of this; but my impression grew in strength, the more I saw of, and conversed with him. He did not indeed deny, though he never positively admitted, that he *had* betted; but many little circumstances that I not only observed now, but remembered to have noticed since his removal to Lady Fetherstone's (amongst others, a remarkable shabbiness in such articles of his attire as he had to purchase himself), tended to convince me that he had been led to indulge in this dangerous practice, and was greatly straitened in means in consequence.

I had much serious talk with him at that time; speaking with an earnest authority which I felt our mutual relations not only warranted, but called for. But although he listened with respectful attention, and an appearance of being impressed by what I said; and although he once voluntarily promised me never to bet in future (he did not say *again*); he was still silent and uncommunicative, and therefore, to a certain degree, unsatisfactory.

I was much pressed for time at this period, and preoccupied with anxious and difficult cases; but the thought of Arthur Bentmore was seldom long absent from my mind. His pale miserable face actually haunted me. His father had confided him to my care, and I trembled for his future. I saw him on the brink of ruin—perhaps of destruction—yet I was powerless to avert either. Meanwhile, a change took place in his position and circumstances, which tended rather to increase than to diminish my anxiety on his account. He obtained the late butler's place.

V.

One fine clear winter's day, some fourteen months after the death of Mr. Jacobs, as I was standing with my back to the fire in my consulting-room, Arthur Bentmore, dressed in neat plain clothes, entered, hat in hand.

He had grown very much during the last twelvemonth; but he was thinner and paler than I had ever before seen him. He was literally cadaverous.

Our first mutual greetings over, he informed me that he had come for two purposes: the first, to announce that he was about to leave Lady Fetherstone.

I started. About to leave Lady Fetherstone? So good a service? so generous a mistress? who valued him, as I had reason to know, very highly! Something of undefined apprehension shot through my mind.

But he went on to explain that he had not felt well for some weeks; had been decidedly worse quite lately; and he was conscious that he required *rest*—rest, entire and complete. He was sorry, very sorry, to leave Lady Fetherstone; she had been most kind to him; but he should be laid up if he remained. He had told her how it was; and she had quite acquiesced. He was to leave in a month, if her ladyship could suit herself. He required, as it were, to—to take breath. He drew—not without a visible effort—a long breath as he spoke; and I mentally resolved that as soon as his time was up, he should come to my house and submit to regular professional treatment from me.

But what was the other purpose for which he had come?

He put his hat down on the floor. "You have by you, sir," he answered, "some money of mine."

"Money of yours!"

"Some silver, sir; only a trifle; nine shillings. I brought it, if you remember, when I was a lad; one morning in summer; and you put it in your desk, to keep for me."

I remembered perfectly now the secret drawer in which I had placed it. Yes; there was the silver; almost black from age; three half-crowns, two shillings, and a sixpence, with the threepence wrapped up in a paper by themselves. As I pushed the little heap towards him, I said, with a certain anxiety, "Surely, my good Arthur, you don't *need* such a sum as this."

He met my gaze without flinching; yet a slight tinge of colour rose to his cheek. I saw it distinctly, as he said, "I *do* want it, if you please, sir. You remember my father's debt to Mr. Moreen."

"Certainly. Full well."

"I wish to pay it; and I make bold to ask you to go with me when I pay it, sir."

He made a step forward, and laying an envelope on the table, "There," said he, "are eighty-seven pounds, which, with the silver and coppers you have there, makes up the sum owing."

I was so much astonished as to be for the moment incapable of reflection. But soon, to amazement, succeeded another feeling. The old painful fear shot through me. I fixed my eyes steadily on his.

"Arthur! how came you by all this money?"

He put his hand in his pocket and laid before me a paper containing an exact account of every shilling he had ever saved in service, and how he had saved it.

This paper recorded a daily, hourly series of sacrifices throughout the long course of four years; begun at the age when self-conquest is the hardest, self-indulgence the most natural; continued with unchanging resolution in spite of every trial, every temptation; persisted in to the very end.

He spoke only once; as I was approaching the end of his extraordinary memorandum; but it was simply to explain that Mr. Gillies, the schoolmaster, had put this money, at various times, into the savings-bank for him, and had thus realised a small increase, which, with the fourteen shillings overplus in the account—the month's wages and beer money that would be due to him next month—and a few shillings of presents he had accumulated, would go to maintain him whilst he should continue out of service. He might, he observed, have paid off this debt a little sooner, as I could see; but he considered that he should do wrong to leave himself entirely without money.

I heard him, as he spoke, but I scarcely heeded him. My mind—my heart were too full. I was thinking of the suspicions I had harboured against him—of the wrong I had done him in my own thoughts; and he, all the while, biding his time; leading a life of such unexampled self-denial! To him it seemed, however, that he had done no more than was natural to be done in similar circumstances.

"You know, Mr. Moreen said, sir, that there was no honesty in the blood! *no honesty in the blood!* He said father was not honest: that we was all a bad lot together. Now, I knew that father *was* honest. The debt had been his greatest distress in his last hours. I had reason to know that; for many and many a time he charged me to pay it; and so to clear his memory. How, then, could I do other than pay it?"

VI.

Mr. Moreen had risen materially in the world. He had increased in both bodily and worldly substance. But though a man, solid in every sense of the word, and with—well! we will say—*some*

money in the funds, Mr. Moreen still stuck to the old shop.

In the doorway of this old shop stood Mr. Moreen now, as Arthur and I drove up in the modest brougham, which, in those days, I hired for my professional visits. He was respectfully seeing a great lady out; he flourished his rule by way of saluting me, and added his usual respectful bow and smile, but did not speak till the coroneted carriage with its high stepping-bays had dashed from the door. "That's the countess—that is," he said, as we entered. "She comes here most days, and stays—well! I suppose she stays an hour or more, choosing, and changing, and ordering of the carvings for the old oak sideboard she's a having put together. It'll be a splendid sideboard when done. A surprise, too, for his lordship. But, dear me, she gives herself a deal of trouble more than she need to! She will have this, and she won't have that, and she thinks she'd fancy the other! It would be better left to me—better left to me. But these great ladies, d'ye see, they're—they're *wilful* (with a strong emphasis on the word); I suppose they've got nothing else to do."

He winked at me with that clear, honest, blue eye of his, and laughed with the low, lazy, internal chuckle common to such large men; and when I observed that it was not your great ladies only that were wilful, he laughed still more. "Ha," he said, "all women *was* wilful, not a doubt about it."

A half-bantering, half-serious conversation followed, with mutual friendly inquiries as to health, and so forth; then there was a pause, and, for the first time, he looked at my companion. But his glance was momentary, and had nothing of recognition in it.

"I see you don't remember this young man," I said, "yet he is an old acquaintance of yours, Arthur Bentmore."

"Indeed?"

He turned and surveyed him with an easy good-natured glance. "Young Bentmore! *Indeed!* He have grown precious tall—a good bit taller than my John, and they're about the same age, I think. But he don't look strong. I'm afraid you don't have your health, young man! Let me see," Mr. Moreen put his rule meditatively to his lips, pursing them up as though about to whistle. "Didn't I see something in the papers about young Bentmore, a year or a year and a half ago? A inquest, or something? Ah! true! *I* recollect. Butler, in your fam'ly (turning to Arthur). True—true! Yes, I remember. And you give your evidence very proper. Mrs. M., she read it all out loud to us at tea; seeing of your name, and what the coroner said and all. But I hope," added the upholsterer, suddenly changing the expression of his good-humoured face to one of stern severity, and laying a long, square, powerful forefinger upon Arthur's coat; "excuse *me*, young man, but I hope you don't bet yourself! Betting will never come to no good; be sure of that."

"No! no!" I said, interposing, "Arthur has come to-day about a little matter of business with you, Mr. Moreen, if you have leisure to attend to it."

"With me?"

Again the upholsterer looked at the young man. This time more attentively; and in one moment he was a different person himself. It had been chat; good-humoured friendly chat, between us hitherto; now it was business.

"I suppose it's the old story," he said, laying down his rule, and putting his hands in his pockets, as if to guard what he might possess there. "The old story! Wants employment! But——"

He shook his head. It was a most expressive shake.

"I am not come to ask for anything," Arthur Bentmore said, quietly. "You remember the debt my father owed you, Mr. Moreen?"

"I—should—think—I—did!" the upholsterer answered, very slowly, laying marked emphasis on each separate word. "I'm more likely to remember that debt than I am ever to get a farthing of it, by a precious deal! Eighty-seven pounds nine shillings and threepence. That was the amount. Mrs. M. and I had more words concerning of that debt than we ever had 'bout anything; I think she's never forgotten it. Nor she's never discontinued throwing of it in my teeth. She were against my lending of it from the first; and that (turning to me), that give her a handle, d'ye see, against me. *Of* course. She'd no opinion of John Bentmore. Never had."

He had become confidential again. He never could help it, when he spoke of his wife. And he always jerked out his sentences, and made long pauses between, when that dreaded individual was in question. It was like an occasional brief letting off of steam lest the engine should burst.

Arthur waited patiently, without attempting to interrupt him.

"Well!" said Mr. Moreen at last, jingling his silver with both hands; "what of that debt? You're not——" he burst into a low laugh of exquisite enjoyment. "You're not—come to—to pay it? Are ye, young man?"

He turned to me, his blue eyes swimming in tears of rapture at the extravagance of his own humour, and laughed till his face grew purple.

"I *am* come to pay it," Arthur Bentmore replied, slowly; and, opening the parcel he had all along held tightly in one hand, spread out on a buhl table that stood near the fruits of four years' self-denial.

There was a dead silence.

Not for a twelvemonth—not for a lifetime—of fees—would I have lost that scene.

Mr. Moreen's laugh had stopped. He stood silent; vacantly staring at the money.

At last he turned to me.

"Of course, doctor, *you* lent him this!" he said gravely, and with frequent pauses, as though reflecting; "but I couldn't think of it. Cert'ny not. On no account. I couldn't think of taking such a thing from you."

"No one has lent me this money," Arthur said; "I have earned it all. Doctor Peregrine knows it; Doctor Peregrine will tell you how it was earned. Sir, when I was a little lad, you told me here—in this very shop—standing where we now stand—that my father—God bless him!—was not an honest man. You said there was no honesty in the blood. You said I should turn out bad, like the rest of us! I was but young then—only thirteen. When you said those cruel words of my dead father, I resolved that I would never rest till I had paid you, and proved them false. It has been hard to do; so hard, that it has changed my whole nature, I often think. No one knows what I have gone through—not a living creature but myself! but I would have gone through fifty times as much to pay that debt! I thank God that I have lived to pay it, and to clear my father's memory."

I write this now; I write the words I heard him speak, but I can no more give a notion of their effect than I could if I had never heard them. He, at all times so subdued, so self-possessed, so impossible to rouse, was suddenly transformed into another creature. Form, voice, countenance—all changed. His words came forth rapidly. The pent-up emotions of those four toiling, self-denying years, found a vent at last.

"And now, sir! now!" Arthur cried, raising his thin hand with a gesture that thrilled through my very heart; "believe me, who have never wilfully uttered one false word from the hour when you did us that cruel wrong—my father was an honest man. I say it in my Maker's presence. Perhaps in his!"

Arthur stopped short; for he found himself suddenly seized by the powerful grasp of Mr. Moreen, and whirled, rather than drawn, to the window.

"Well, but you know," said the upholsterer, drawing him nearer, and then holding him further off, as you would a picture you were examining in different lights; but all the while clenching him in his tremendous hand as in a vice. "You're a grand fellow, you are! *You* pay your father's debts, do ye? But you're a grand fellow! What? You laid by to pay me, did ye? all these years! Why! you *are* a grand fellow! *You* did it, did ye? And I said you weren't honest. Well! I wish I'd been——I wish my tongue had been cut out before I said it. But you know you *are* honest. You! a little lad as you was. *You* pay the old man's debt. Yes! you have—you *have* paid it. Oh! but you're a grand fellow."

Ringing the changes on these words—unable to express the feelings that were bursting his heart—upheaving his broad chest—choking his voice—the tears rained down the honest man's cheeks, and he knew it no more than did Mrs. Moreen, sitting at work with her girls above stairs.

Mr. Moreen's emotion had the natural effect of calming Arthur's. The poor lad was passive in his grasp. But after a time the worthy upholsterer began to return as it were to himself. He relaxed his hold; and taking out his pocket-handkerchief, wiped his eyes and face.

"I ask pardon, sir," he said, turning to me, and speaking in a low and apologetic tone; "I ask pardon, I'm sure; but I'm—I'm—I never was so—I never see such a thing as this before. It took me unprepared, you see. I didn't look for such a thing. Not at all. And to think—to think that them words of mine should have cut so deep—a poor young lad like that—that's where it is, you see." Then, turning to Arthur, "You're a grand fellow, sir!"

Strange—the effect of that "sir" in Mr. Moreen's mouth, as addressed to Arthur Bentmore. How well I understood it: better than he did himself. It was the involuntary, unconscious homage paid to the honesty of that stripling, by the sturdy tradesman who valued honesty above all earthly treasures.

"But you know I can't take it, sir!" Mr. Moreen suddenly exclaimed, when he had become more cool; recalled to the consideration of the money by the sight of it spread out on the buhl table. "I can't take them earnings and savings of that lad's. It can't be. The thing ain't in nature. Mrs. M. herself, she wouldn't hear of it."

This was the signal for fresh excitement. A keen dispute followed this declaration, during which it was difficult to say which showed the most determined spirit, Mr. Moreen or Arthur. But it was clear to me that the latter must in the end prevail.

VII.

As soon as his month's notice to leave Lady Fetherstone's service had expired, Arthur Bentmore came to my house to be attended professionally, and, if need be, nursed. It was high time he should do so. He had tasked his constitution too severely. He had grown too fast, worked too hard, and slept too little. Now that the excitement was over which had hitherto borne him up under every trial, he collapsed. There was a reaction.

When at last I had the happiness of seeing him really restored to health, I proposed to him to remain with me as my servant. The plan was precisely what he wished. But after six months' trial of him, I made up my mind that I must give him notice. It went against my conscience to keep him. As a servant, Arthur Bentmore was entirely thrown away. He was intended for higher things. He had a mind capable of mastering almost any subject, and would do honour to any position. Ever since the day of that last memorable visit to my consulting-room, his reserve with me had entirely disappeared. His confidence had been indeed hard to gain; but once gained, it was given wholly, and for ever. He felt towards me now, as towards a father. I had entered into, and sympathised with, the strongest feeling of his nature; I had rejoiced for, and in him, on the one great occasion of his life; and from that hour he was bound to me by the strongest of all ties.

I had mentioned his touching story to persons

who had it in their power materially to befriend him; and the result was that he obtained a situation connected with one of our most important railways. He continued three years in that situation. In the fourth, he was promoted to a more responsible post on the same railway. From this time his rise was singularly rapid. He made money. Being in the way of hearing of good investments, his keen sense and excellent judgment enabled him to avail himself of them. He bought land in the outskirts of a great manufacturing town, built good houses on it, and sold them at an enormous profit. With this money, he entered into still larger speculations (invariably judicious and safe), and in a short time realised a considerable capital. At thirty, Arthur Bentmore was one of the men in that thriving town whose word carried the most weight with it. He remained single till he was five-and-thirty, and then brought to preside over his comfortable home one of the three daughters of his own parish clergyman: a pretty, unpretending, affectionate girl, who had been brought up in a pious and provident household, and was sure to make him a fond and grateful wife. At forty-seven, he was mayor of his town, and had two sons and three daughters, promising and healthy.

During all these years, he and I have kept up a constant and affectionate intercourse. He is now a director of more than one railway, and he comes frequently to London, sometimes alone—brought there by business—sometimes with his wife. On these occasions he always dines with his old friend Gillies—whom he has made comfortable for life—or with me. And there is nothing delights us so much as these quiet dinners.

"It all seems as though it were but yesterday," he would say, as we sat together over our dessert, and he looked across the table at me with those large wonderful eyes of his, that seemed gazing far back into the past; "I often think I am a page again, and dream it too, sometimes. My wife says I still add up shillings and sixpences in my sleep."

With Mr. Moreen, grown very old and infirm, and retired from business (though he still lives in the old shop), Arthur Bentmore has kept up not only an acquaintance, but a steady friendship since those early days.

Arthur had not long quitted my service, when the upholsterer was laid up with an unusually severe attack of bronchitis. He was always very hippish when ill, as many such strong giants are. But his mind, though morbidly sensitive from the state of his body, was full of Arthur Bentmore, towards whom he reproached himself with having acted the part of a brute. He would talk about him to me as long as my visit lasted, and shed tears when he recurred to the lad's early abstinence from *beer*. That point touched him more than all. "Yes!" he would exclaim, "I don't know as I ever said words I've repented of so much since. I *have* repented of 'em. Bitter. They'll sound to me, when I'm a dying—I know that. And he going on denying of himself his little drop o' beer—a growing chap like that, that wanted it."

In the course of this illness, he confided to me, that although Mrs. M. had been struck with admiration at the noble conduct of the boy, she yet had not at all agreed with *him*, as to the propriety of refusing the money. She took a more business-like view of the transaction. The debt was a debt, she considered, and ought to be discharged. They had no more right to rob their own children of the money, than they had to deprive the lad himself of the satisfaction to his feelings of paying it. "There wouldn't be no merit in what he done, if he was to get it back again," said Mrs. M.

"I don't agree with her *there*, sir," said Mr. Moreen, speaking low and confidentially, as though to differ from Mrs. M. even in the expression of an opinion, were too dangerous a matter to be overheard; "the merit's the same in what he done, anyhow, it seems to me. But Mrs. M., she's so first-rate here, you see!" tapping his own broad forehead, "and she judges of things more by the headpiece than she do by the feelin's. *I'm* not equal to her in that—oh, no!"

When he heard that Arthur was about to set up a house of his own, he entered into a little plot with me, to furnish the living rooms gratis; and never was man more thoroughly happy than Mr. Moreen was during the mysterious consultations and arrangements necessary to effect this object. I persuaded Arthur to visit me in London, whilst he went down to the manufacturing town in question, to superintend every detail. He spared neither trouble nor expense. Nothing was, nothing could be, too good for that grand fellow! And the way in which he revelled in Arthur's astonishment and admiration, when on his return he discovered what had been done, was worth going miles to see.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER IX. INTRODUCTORY TO A WILD ANIMAL.

RATAPLAN was entirely deficient in the Rhododendron characteristic. It was a very late house. Nobody dreamt of going to bed till one or two o'clock in the morning, save Mademoiselle Adèle, who retired at eleven, comme il convenait à une jeune personne. The French are accustomed to treat their daughters like children till they are twenty years of age, and their sons like grown up persons when they are ten. The paternal Rataplan came up from the regions of the kitchen towards eleven, and played cards or smoked a cigar with one of his guests for a couple of hours. People used to treat him to innumerable small glasses to hear him brag of his exploits during his campaigns with the Grand Army, and his colloquy with the Emperor at Montereau; although there were those of a malevolent turn of mind who insinuated that he had never been at the Beresina or at Montereau; but that happening to keep a small wine-shop at the corner of a street in Paris during the three glorious days of July, 1830, a barricade had been erected close to his door, and at a critical moment he had rushed out, and crying "Vive la Charte!" had stricken down a corporal of grenadiers with a soup ladle, whereupon he had become a décoré de Juillet.

It was half-past twelve on a summer night—I need not further particularise it, for I have not yet passed the limits of the four-and-twenty hours in the course of which all the events hitherto narrated have occurred—when Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant, in his master's Spanish cloak, entered the marble hall of the Hôtel Rataplan, and passed into the salle à manger, as one well accustomed to the locality.

Rataplan was alone, smoking and sipping his "gzogs" (as he was accustomed to call a very little brandy with a great deal of sugar and lukewarm water), and endeavouring to spell through one of the seven days' old Siècles. The gallant warrior-cook's education was defective. His womankind kept his books and wrote his letters for him.

"How goes it, mon vieux? Touchez-là!" said the valet. And he extended his palm, and Rataplan smote his own palm thereupon, and went on reading.

"Will you smoke?" asked Rataplan, after a moment.

"Business to attend to"—the two men spoke French—"else I would first have presented my homages to the ladies. Is the countess at home?"

"Half an hour ago. Is having her supper now."

"And her little temper?"

"Ouf! n'en parlez pas. The whole menagerie of the Jardin des Plantes does not contain such a wild animal. The bear, Martin, when the nurse refused to throw him the second of her babies, when he had played off the little practical joke of eating the first, was never in such a temper. Temper! It is a mania! A delirium, an ecstasy of spasmodic and anarchical passions. That woman is all the furies rolled into one, plus Frédégonde, Clytemnestra, and Madame Croquemitaine."

Rataplan had been a great frequenter of the Boulevard theatres in his youth, and piqued himself on his familiarity with dramatic literature. He was given, besides quoting Béranger, to spouting long harangues from tragedies, both in prose and verse.

"What is the matter with the countess?"

"Matter! what else but her diabolical, sulphureous, Mount Etna of a temper can be the matter with her? They are not words, but red-hot lava streams, that flow from her lips. You are Herculaneum and Pompeii before her, and she engulphs you. But, pardieu, she is not the Muette de Portici! She has a tongue as long as an academic discourse. There is no stopping, no satisfying, no pacifying, her. She is implacable in her rages. She comes in here, after midnight; and, without the slightest salutation, says, 'Papa Rataplan, is my supper ready?' I make her a reverence. I say, taking off my cook's cap—an act of homage I would not render to Louis Philippe, roi des Français et des pékins—'Madame told me on going out that she would take no supper.' 'What?' responds she. 'Papa Rataplan, you are a ganache! On the instant let me have oysters of Colchesterre, a trout fried, all that you have in the way of cutlets, a sweet omelette, a Charlotte aux pommes, a salade de mâches, some champagne, Burgundy, Bordeaux, and so forth.' And all this on the

instant! 'Madame,' I humbly represent, 'there are no oysters fit for the palate of a lady. There is no salade de mâches. Covent Garden goes to bed at eight o'clock precisely. As to the cutlets, you can have some. As to the omelette, by all means. As to the Charlotte, it is an impossibility, seeing that I have no apples—unless you would condescend to potatoes. As for the wines, you bring them with you, paying me a shilling a cork, and saying that mine are not fit to drink, so you know best. In effect, I am desolated that I cannot give you to eat as you desire; but if you would like a mayonnaise de homard, or some pickelle sammone de chez ce bon Monsieur Quin in the Aimarkette, in ten minutes vous serez à votre aise.'"

"And what does she reply?"

"She tells me to go to the five hundred devils. She outrages the Mère Thomas. She affronts Antoine. That woman's language smells of the stable in which she passes her time. 'Oui, Rataplan,' she says to me, 'je vous considère comme le dernier des derniers.' And then, forsooth, she must insult my sleeping cherub, and say that poor little Adèle's pianoforte practice distracts her nerves, and that if I do not put a stop to it she must find another hotel. It is likely, eh? When I pay Signor Tripanelli half a guinea a lesson for her instruction, and know that with two years' more practice she will be the first pianiste of the world, and cause Thalberg and Chopin to hang themselves in envious despair."

"Why don't you give her her congé?"

Rataplan shrugged his shoulders. One does not like to lose so excellent a customer. She is worth ten guineas a week to us whenever she comes to stay at the Hôtel Rataplan. I should not like that Grossous, at the Hôtel Belgiosso, to get hold of her. Tripefourbe, of the Hôtel du Belvédère dans le Soho, has already endeavoured to seduce her away from us. And even the wild animal has her moments of amiability. She gave only last week to Adèle, a brooch—malachite, I think you call it. I saw a snuff-box made of it, which the Cossack Alexander gave to the Emperor at Tilsit. Only yesterday, she threw Adèle a cashmere, a true cachemire des Indes, in which she had burnt a hole with a red-hot poker, in a rage because milord did not come. Adèle will soon darn up that hole. It is a cashmere of a ravishing nature!"

"Ah! And so milord did not come, and miladi was in a rage. Perhaps she expected him to supper to-night, and his failure was the secret of her temper."

"Tiens, I think not. To be sure, she sent the commissionnaire this morning to the Albany, where milord lives, and he was out, and lo and behold, when she made her appearance this night, there was a note waiting for her—a little pink note—and having read it, she ordered the supper I told you of."

"Then milord may be coming."

"Not at all! A little jockey, with breeches of leather and top-boots, was here not five minutes before your arrival. By word of mouth he delivered the message that his master was very sorry, but could not come. Antoine went up and told her. She flew into one of her sulphureous ecstasies, and nearly strangled him."

"It is now half-past twelve. Is she gone to bed?"

"To bed! She won't seek her couch till three. She will scold that unhappy Barbette, her femme de chambre, till past two. Then she will walk about the room, and smoke like a sapper, and swear like a cuirassier, for another hour. To bed! It is lucky for her bed that she goes to it so late. She must quarrel with the bolster, and kick the counterpane all night."

"I think you had better announce me."

"I warn you that she is exceedingly ferocious to-night, and that grave results may follow even my intrusion to announce you."

"Have no fear. She may bite, but I don't fear her barking. I have been a keeper in the Jardin des Plantes, and am not afraid of wild animals. Allons, mon bon. Do as I tell you."

Rataplan rose with anything but a good grace, and murmuring something about the inexpediency of bearding tigresses in their den. He shuffled up stairs. Constant heard him timorously tap at a door. Then there was a tempest of words audible—confined, however, to a single voice; and after a while the host descended to the salle à manger again, with something positively approaching a faint violet flush on his pale face.

"I told you so," he said. "She is a panther of the Island of Java. A beautiful jaguar. However, if you are fond of wild beasts, there she is. Go, my friend, and be devoured. And he sat down, drew the candle closer to him, mixed himself a fresh tumbler of "gzog," re-illumined the butt-end of his cigar—a Frenchman never desists until the weed begins to burn the tip of his nose, and then he sticks the stump on the point of a penknife—and so resumed his perusal of the Siècle seven days old.

Monsieur Constant went quietly up-stairs, and softly laid his hand upon the handle of the door of the front drawing-room. I must keep Monsieur Constant with his hand upon the handle for the space of two chapters, while I cross the water on an excursion very necessary to this narrative.

CHAPTER X. BEGINS AN IDYLL.

In the department of the Bouches du Rhône, and in the neighbourhood of Avignon, there are few prettier villages than Marouille-le-Gency, in the sous-préfecture of Nougat.

There are not ten houses of more than one story, and not above a hundred cottages; but they are all pretty. They are built, mostly of stone, or of sunburnt bricks whitened over, and roofed in with those convex tiles, laid on loose, and secured only by pegs, such as you see in Italian villages. White as are their fronts, they

were half-hidden by clustering vines. A vineyard, itself, is not ordinarily inviting to the sight. In its picturesque aspect it exists only in the imagination of scene-painters, in the engravings of defunct landscape annuals, and in the fancy performances, in oil and water colours, sent every year to exhibitions. For real beauty, I will match a Kentish hop garden, or a Twickenham orchard, against the most luxuriant vineyard in the sunny south. We say little about the south being chronically stormy as well as sunny. It is only on the banks of the Rhine, where the grapes grow in terraces, one above the other, to the very tops of the hills, that a wine-bearing district assumes a romantic look. It is the same with olive-trees. Olives in their saline solution, popularly, but erroneously, supposed to be sea-water, are very nice to eat with your claret, and very nice to talk or sing about in ballad poetry; but a plantation of olive-trees is, next to a field of mangold-wurzel, about the ugliest object in nature you can come across. Hemp beats it. Flax beats it. Clover demolishes it utterly, in an artistic sense. The vines, however, that cluster beneath the cottage roof, and the olives that grow in the front garden, are certainly charming; and Marouille-le-Gency had an abundance of both.

The little river Bâve, one of the tributaries of the Rhône, ran right across the village street, and the villagers were great people for clean linen. They were even given to washing themselves as well as their clothes: a strange thing in the south. The village was girt about with real orange-groves. There was an abundance of myrtles. The entrance to the hamlet was planted with gigantic plants of the cactus tribe. The rarest and most beautiful flowers grew nearly all the year in the open air. Turtle-doves cooed from the tiles. Thickets of the maritime stone pine covered the hills behind Marouille, over which frowned the grey mediæval Château of Ocques, once a baronial residence, then a fortress, then a barrack, now a penitentiary.

The "correctionnaires," or inmates of this house of penance, did not trouble the inhabitants much. They were kept with commendable stringency behind the strong stone walls of the Castle of Ocques, where they worked for their sins at sailcloth weaving, rope-making, and mat-plaiting. Once in six months or so, one of their number escaped; but Marouille-le-Gency had a breed of strong savage dogs, and, a substantial reward being offered for the capture of fugitives, the refugee was soon hunted down. The house of correction was principally useful to the villagers as a bugbear, or bête noire, to scare their refractory children withal, who, when they did not behave themselves, were threatened with being sent là-haut, up there, to the big old castle.

The inhabitants were mostly small proprietors, each cultivating his own particular patch of vineyard or olive garden, and contriving to make both ends meet, in a scrambling kind of manner, at the end of the year. The necessaries of life were cheap. Bread was coarse, but plentiful. Meat was seldom eaten, but as seldom asked for. Beyond a few river trout and some salt fish in Lent, there was no consumption of piscine delicacies. Oranges and grapes cost nothing at all. The country wine cost only four sous the litre, and for luxuries the denizens of Marouille-le-Gency had a profound disregard.

They did not occupy themselves much with contemporary politics. Theoretically they were legitimists, and kept as a fête the anniversary of the grand day A.D. 1815, when Monseigneur Louis Antoine, Fils de France and Duke of Angoulême, had passed through Marouille-le-Gency on his way to unfurl the white flag at Bordeaux. By the same token, their usual mild natures had undergone an eclipse of ferocity, and they mobbed and nearly murdered Napoleon on his way to Elba after his first abdication at Fontainebleau. The ex-imperial carriage halted to change horses at the village posthouse; the moody occupant was recognised, hooted, insulted, stoned; knives were brandished at the windows; inflamed faces with fiery eyes glared in upon him; and, but for the presence of mind of the mayor, who was known to be a Bourbonist, and who, baring his breast, stood at the coach door pointing to his breast, and crying, "He is a tyrant, but you shall kill me first!" they would have dragged the fallen hero from his vehicle and flung him under the wheels. It is said that Napoleon shed tears of rage and shame at this unmannerly reception, and that as soon as he was clear of Marouille he changed clothes with one of his postilions, and in jack-boots, a red waistcoat, and a hat flaunting with ribbons, clacked his whip, and bestrode the leader, in order to avoid similar insults at the next stage. It must be admitted that, although inveterate against him in adversity, the Marouillais had never fawned upon him in his prosperity. They had invariably detested his rule. The mothers and sweethearts of Marouille cursed him consistently and continually. The flower of their youth had been taken away from their vineyards to shed their blood in his incessant battles.

Nevertheless, for years after 1821, they obstinately refused to believe at Marouille in Napoleon's death, holding that he was still secured by the English with a strong chain riveted to the wall of a dungeon in the island of St. Helena; and as a "bogy" for naughty children he divided popularity with the Châtcau d'Ocques. Da capo. For the rest they were very pious, and the most docile of parishioners to their curé, believing implicitly in relics, the genuineness of modern miracles, and the direct intervention of the saints in curing the diseases of cattle, and in assisting the cultivation of the vine. Spells, incantations, second sight, and the evil eye, were in high repute among the Marouillais.

In the year 1825, Charles the Tenth being king of France and Navarre, there came to live at Marouille-le-Gency, as landlord of its solitary

auberge and posthouse—a long low tenement, by the sign of The Lilies of France—a young Swiss called Jean Baptiste Constant.

He had been, according to his own account, in domestic service, and had saved some money. There was no mystery about him. His appearance harmonised with the signalement on his passport, and his papers were perfectly en règle. He had bought the good-will of the Lilies of France out of a notary's étude at Avignon, where it had been deposited for sale by the executors of Madame the Widow Barrichon, who had been its hostess ever since the days of the Great Revolution. Carrier had once set up a guillotine in her back yard, and decapitated half a score of "arestos" there. The villagers declared that, ever since that hideous day, the water of the well in the back yard had worn a purple tinge. The in-coming tenant of the auberge had paid a handsome price for it—twenty-five thousand francs, so the gossips of the village said—half down and half at mortgage on the security of the premises. A man who could command such an amount of capital was looked upon as a personage, and the villagers determined to be very civil to him. The mayor called on him the day after his arrival at Marouille. M. le Curé set him down as one of the future corporation of the fatrigue. Fortunately for his peace of mind at Marouille, he was, although a Swiss, a Catholic, hailing from some canton on the Italian frontier, This was fortunate, because the Marouillais dislike heretics, classing them with gipsies, poachers, and escaped correctionnaires. He was, likewise, a bachelor, of about twenty-eight apparently, and, although somewhat swarthy and down-looking, athletic, vivacious, and, on the whole, a very personable fellow. He brought neither kith nor kin with him to his new abiding-place, and the mothers of the village who had marriageable daughters looked upon him favourably from a matrimonial point of view.

He was a good man of business, and looked keenly after the main chance; but he was no niggard. He was willing to be treated, but could treat, too, in his turn, upon occasion. He soon drove a very prosperous trade at the Lilies of France, and, being postmaster, made a good deal out of the rich English travellers on their way to Nice. He engaged as housekeeper, a strong old woman called La Beugleuse. She was not handsome, and far from amiable, and had a desperate potency of harsh lungs, whence her name; but she was very strong, and had a mania for hard work. She kept the stable-boys and postilions sober, and up to their duties, and she looked after the lodgers while Constant served in the bar or waited on the customers in the billiard-room. Moreover, she brought a pair of hands with her in addition to her own. These supplementary hands belonged to her niece, Valérie, who, in 1825, was a slut of a girl not more than fifteen years of age. She was an overgrown loutish kind of a lass, and yet, for all her long limbs, seemed dwarfed and stunted about the head and shoulders. Her skin was coarse; her hands were tanned with hard labour; her voice was harsh and strident, her manners were uncouth and boorish. She had magnificent brown hair, which hung about her head and neck in a tangled mass, and she had big blue eyes, at which few people cared to look admiringly, seeing that they were enshrined in a sunburnt, dirty face. She was an incorrigible slattern, and her temper was abominable. Children are rarely beaten in France; it is looked upon as a cruel and dastardly thing even to box a girl's ears; but no one blamed La Beugleuse when she thrashed her refractory niece with a knotted rope or a leathern trace, or tied her up to one of the mangers in the stable. It seemed natural that Vaurien-Valérie should be treated like a stubborn horse or mule. She was held up as a warning and example to the insubordinate juveniles of the village. "If you don't mind what's said to you, and give way to your temper, you will come to be flogged and tied up in a stable, like Valérie à la Beugleuse." Nobody cared to inquire what her patronymic was, so they gave her a share of her aunt's nickname.

Perhaps the education she had received was not very conducive to the development of feminine character, or the cultivation of delicate manners. Her mother had died in bearing her. Her father had run away from his employment as a postilion, after drawing a bad number in the conscription, and had then sold himself as a substitute in the army. It was in 1815, when the Emperor was desperately in need of men, and pressing questions were not asked. The substitute was three times promoted, through sheer desperate valour in the field of battle, to the rank of sergeant; and was as many times reduced to the ranks for flagrant misconduct. He didn't drink, he didn't gamble; he was honest, but incurably insubordinate. Fortunately for the glory of France, and the interests of society, Valérie's father got himself killed at the battle of Waterloo, where he was found by a party of Prussian foragers under a heap of slain, riddled with lance wounds, and his arms firmly locked round those of an English dragoon, whom he had dragged off his horse, and killed by tearing his throat in sunder with his teeth.

La Beugleuse took care, after a fashion, of the little orphan Valérie, who in her cradle bawled more than fifty ordinary babies. La Beugleuse was miserably poor. She earned her daily bread by working in the fields as a day labourer. When Valérie was old enough—that is to say, when she was seven—she too went into the fields, to scare the birds away. La Beugleuse sent her to the village school, but she would learn nothing there. They put her on the fool's cap, or bonnet d'ane; they made her kneel across sharp rulers, but in vain. Frequently she played truant, and remained away, among the thickets on the hill, for days together. The curé preached against her in church, for she declined to be catechised, and was the only black sheep among the snowy little flock whom he prepared for

their first communion. When she was ten, she might have earned ten sous a day by picking up stones in the vineyards; but she destroyed more vines than she picked up stones. The curé advised La Beugleuse to send her to Avignon, to a convent, where the good sisters received such undisciplined colts as she, and broke them in with mingled kindness and severity; but Valérie coolly announced her determination of setting fire to the convent and murdering one of the sisters in consecration of the first night she passed under a monastic roof. She was now between thirteen and fourteen, and at about this time Jean Baptiste Constant came to Marouille and entered into possession of the Lilies of France. La Beugleuse took service with him, and Valérie accompanied her. The vaurien soon grew familiar with the stable, and on most friendly terms with the horses and mules, would ride them bare-backed to water, would litter and rub them down, and feed them, and, indeed, was in a short time quite as useful as an ostler. Partly from compassion, and partly from an idea that the girl could be overcome by other means than violence, Jean Baptiste persuaded the housekeeper to abandon her formerly unvaried specific of flogging. For a time the girl went on worse, and was intolerably riotous and rebellious; but, after a while, she came to show, towards Jean Baptiste at least, a strange surly docility which seemed to be in some degree due to affection, and to some extent to fear. She came at his call, and almost at his whistle, like a dog. She obeyed all his orders without a murmur. A stern word or a stern look from Jean Baptiste was sufficient to render her meek and submissive whenever she showed a disposition to defy her aunt. The mayor, M. le Curé, all the villagers, marvelled at the phenomenon. Valérie was wholly changed.

But a stranger phenomenon was soon to take place. When the girl came to be sixteen she grew with astounding rapidity exceedingly beautiful. Like Peau d'âne in the fairy tale, she seemed, all at once, to have changed from a grubby little ragamuffin, a sordid beggar's brat, into a lovely and elegant princess. A princess in rags she might have remained, certainly; but that the landlord of the Lilies of France brought her back, after one of his visits to Avignon, enough cotton print of Rouen manufacture for two work-a-day frocks, and a piece of mingled silk and wool for a Sunday dress. Valérie, who had hitherto been mocked at and despised, as the lowest of the low, was now envied. She went through her long-deferred first communion with unexceptionable decorum. She combed out her tangled brown hair, and arranged it in sumptuous plaits beneath a natty little lace cap. She washed her face, and her big blue eyes shone out from the cleared surface, like stars. A film seemed to have been removed from her voice, even as a cataract is removed by a skilful operator from a diseased eye. The voice was harsh and strident no longer, but full of deep rich tones, and low whispers. When she was in a passion now, she was sublime, not repulsive. The angular movements of her limbs were replaced by an indescribable suppleness and grace. She began to dance without ever having learnt. She began to sing without ever having been taught. She was evidently one of those raw creatures who "pick up" accomplishments, or are gifted with them naturally. Her capacity had flowered late, but the product was marvellous in exuberant beauty.

Her curious obedience to the behests of Jean Baptiste Constant endured during a transitory period. When her beauty was definitively manifest, the shackles, as well as the dirt and the coarseness, and the clumsiness, fell from her limbs. The slave became a tyrant. She turned sharply round on the strong old woman who used to flog her, and in a moment, morally, trampled her aunt under her heel. La Beugleuse was dazed and bewildered by this radiant serpent, so suddenly emergent from a scaly skin. She gave in at once, and became Valérie's very humble and obedient servant. Her master, Jean Baptiste, held out a little longer, and once or twice essayed to scold the girl; but she soon determined the relations that were in future to exist between them. "There is only one person who shall say in this house I WILL, and that person is myself." Thus she said, stamping her foot. The innkeeper bit his lips, and, looking at her curiously from under his drooping eyelids, said "I will" no more—so far at least as she was concerned—at the Lilies of France.

AMATEUR TOUTING.

IT is a grave question whether the effect of all touting is not rather to set you against the thing for which your favourable consideration is solicited, than to draw you towards it. When a couple of shy provincial maidens plant themselves in front of a bonnet-shop in Cranbourne-street, and commence a discussion as to the attainableness or unattainableness of this or that head-dress, they are surely much more likely to be driven away from the shop than attracted into it by the touter, who suddenly appears from within the building, and entreats them to enter. It is so again with the photographic business. The undecided people who get in front of a frame of photographic portraits in the street, wanting to have a good look at them before they determine whether this particular establishment is to be patronised or not—how are these poor souls tormented by the nondescript character who touts for the vampire within! If this dreadful individual does not frighten away these almost-customers by flourishing the horrid little portraits, at one shilling each, before their eyes, and otherwise boring and confusing them, they must be made of tough material indeed.

Touting is a mistake, and a troublesome mistake. The hotel and lodging-house touts, who surround you when you arrive at a popular

watering-place, always set you against the establishments they represent. The fly-men, who are so obliging as to accompany you down the pier at Ryde, putting in a remark every now and then as to the excellency of their vehicles and the vigour of their horses; the cabman, who keeps along by the kerb-stone soliciting your attention every moment with the handle of his whip; the young man who inquires whether you will take a bottle of the renovating hair-wash, or a pot of the Andalusian cream, when you simply want your hair cut; all these touts, and many more of the same class, play the very deuce with the interests of the concern they endeavour to serve.

But all this is professional touting. We have now to do with amateur touters: persons who, with nothing to gain by it, are continually cramming those whose interests they gratuitously serve, down the reluctant throats of their friends.

The recommending of clergymen is one of the commonest forms of touting. You sit under a certain preacher, and have sat under him for years, deriving a vast deal of edification. But this does not satisfy you. There is room in your pew for Somebody Else, and you are always trying to get Somebody Else to come and sit there. Occasionally you succeed, but somehow it happens that this Somebody Else is never satisfied, and leaves the sacred edifice in a critical, not to say vituperative, frame of mind. Sometimes Somebody Else begins at once:—"Well, I must say that, after all you said, and all you had prepared me to expect, I am a little bit disappointed." Choking with indignation, you inquire with enforced calmness, "Why Somebody Else is displeased; what was the matter with the sermon?" "Oh, there was nothing the matter—far from it—it was all sound enough, but then it was so very common-place."

Or, there is another kind of Somebody Else who will maintain a profound and aggravating silence as you walk away from church, until at last you are forced, as it were, to learn the worst, and break out with the momentous question: "Well, what did you think of it?" "Oh," answers your friend, quietly, "I've nothing to say against the sermon, except that it wasn't Christianity." "What! Not Christianity?" "No, certainly not. As the discourse of a heathen philosopher to his disciples, it would have been excellent, but coming from the mouth of an ordained clergyman, in a Christian church, it was almost shocking." In this case Somebody Else is what is called strictly Evangelical, and so is your favourite preacher: only it wonderfully happens that on this particular occasion, as he is addressing people who are supposed to be already Christians, he does not go back to expound the first principles of their creed to them, but ventures to touch for a short time on the kind of life which it behoves them, being Christians already, to lead.

Or suppose, on the other hand, that the first sermon is a success, and that your friend—though it is almost too much to suppose—is satisfied. He is resolved to attend this church himself, and takes a pew to accommodate his family. On the very first Sunday that the family attends this new place of worship, the preacher comes out in a new light, your friend's wife avows her belief that he is an Arian at heart, a universalist, a sceptic, a Jesuit in disguise, or a Calvinist. It would be wicked to let the children listen to such doctrines; they might receive impressions which they would never be able to shake off. What could you—the original touter for this disguised Jesuit, Calvinist, sceptic, Arian, universalist, or what not—what could you mean by inducing this orthodox family to attend the ministrations of this enemy to true religion? And so, you get into a scrape. Your friend informs you, on the occasion of your next meeting, that he has been at the expense of hiring a large family-pew in which neither he nor any member of his family will ever set foot again, and that it is all attributable to your influence. The loss of lucre, however, he continues, is in such a case only a very small matter; he only hopes that no member of his domestic circle may have already imbibed dangerous views; his eldest daughter has recently given utterance to certain sentiments of a dangerous description on the subject of play-going; and Tommy has on two occasions over-eaten himself—and no wonder, for it had in the course of one sermon been remarked by the Reverend Mr. Broadhead—whom *you* had spoken so highly of—that good might be, and doubtless *had* been done, by plays, and that the good things of this life were not put in the world to be rejected by the creatures for whose benefit they were intended.

And so, you see, you have not only touted for the Reverend Broadhead in vain, but you have actually brought discredit upon that really excellent man, and you have caused your friend, who had previously had considerable confidence in your opinion, to regard your principles with mistrust and suspicion. So you had better have let it alone.

As to the passion for recommending doctors, it is a psychological phenomenon of the most wonderful sort. It really seems as if people had their own interests and those of their families, very much less at heart than the advancement of their medical man. You happen to mention in the presence of Mrs. Creakingate and her eldest and invalided daughter, that your wife is not quite the thing, is troubled with nervous headache at times, is suffering from neuralgia in the left temple. As you speak, Mrs. and Miss Creakingate look at each other, and exchange a smile of enlightenment, and as soon as you pause in your remarks, they address each other, not you. "Oh, but this is a case for Dr. Flook, if ever there was a case for Dr. Flook!" Or, "My dear Julia, do you hear? Just the very kind of case which Dr. Flook excels in treating. Now, my dear Mr. Spooner, you must promise me that Mrs. Spooner will see Dr. Flook. He is at this moment attending dear

Rachel at home, and Julia here will tell you what he did for *her*. I assure you, she's not like the same creature. Now, you will send for Dr. Flook, won't you? or, stay, I shall see Dr. Flook to-day—this very afternoon—and I will send him on to you; yes, that will be the best way!"

Or it may be that you yourself are the Doctor's partisan. Your friend, Mr. Pukey, has, in an evil hour for himself, mentioned to you that his digestion is not what he could wish; that he can't digest the commonest, simplest things; that the other day he dined with old Yellowgills quite alone—bit of salmon, lobster sauce, nice cool cucumber, Irish stew, roast pork (with some remarkably good stuffing), and a duck to wind up with—no, by-the-by, there was some dressed crab for a finish. Well; Pukey assures you that he passed the most dreadful night possible, after partaking of this simple meal; as to the wine, it couldn't have been that, because he confined himself entirely to two kinds, sparkling Moselle and claret. What was the meaning of his digestion being disturbed after an entertainment so rational and wholesome, Pukey begs to know? "I'll tell you what's the meaning of it!" you reply, with profundity. "The meaning of it, is, your liver's affected. I've no more doubt of it than that I'm standing here. Now, you take my advice and see Bacon. Bacon is the only man now-a-days who can touch the liver. It's a well-known fact; all his brother practitioners admit it; and directly a bad case of liver is brought before them, their first remark is: 'I should like to meet Bacon about this case; Bacon knows more about the liver than any man in the profession. In fact, he's been mixed up with it, all his life!'"

In both these cases, failure is the issue of all this disinterested touting. Mr. and Mrs. Spooner had got on very well under the care of their usual attendant, Dr. Pilkington: while Dr. Flook, who is at last really forced upon them by the enthusiastic Mrs. Creakingate, does not suit the worthy couple at all. Flook's first proceeding frightens them out of their wits; his first visit is his last; and Mrs. Creakingate is so much offended that a coolness is gradually established between the families, the temperature of which coolness declines and declines until at last it ends in a permanent hard frost, thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit. And besides all this, Dr. Pilkington is so hurt at being superseded by Flook, that he declines ever to enter the abode of the Spooners again. If the Spooners had not about this time found out Dr. Bacon, *for themselves*, it is impossible to say what would have become of them.

And yet, after this painful experience, here is Spooner himself, recommending his friend Pukey to consult Dr. Bacon about his liver. And what is the consequence? The next time Pukey and Spooner meet, the former is in a state of the most violent indignation compatible with the feebleness of his frame. "How could you send that man to me?" he asks. "He has nearly killed me. The man must be a horse-doctor, surely. I declare to you that, for a whole week, I have been lying in a condition between life and death, in consequence of the awful violence of the drugs which the inhuman wretch administered to me. Even now, I believe it will be months before I am able to get up my strength again." The unhappy Pukey has a transparent look which almost deprives Spooner of the power of defending his medical favourite; still he makes the attempt. "But, perhaps, this may be part of the right treatment of the case, and as you advance further——" "Advance further!" cries P.: "you need not trouble yourself about that. Dr. Bacon has received his congé, and will never enter my house again, I promise you." "Ah, you haven't given him a fair trial," says Spooner. And so here is another coolness established, and all through this pernicious touting on the part of private friends.

"Now just 'ave the goodness to look at this, will you," says a certain friend of yours: to whom, as possessed of immense wealth, you have introduced a young painter-friend who paints portraits. "Did you ever see such a thing?" continues your moneyed friend, exhibiting his likeness as completed and sent home by your protégé. "I don't set up for being handsome, but I will say, that when I look in my glass of a morning, it does tell me a pleasanter tale than that. And it's vulgar, too, mind you, that's what I feel most. It's vulgar and staring, and brazen, and not the gentleman. The very clothes don't seem to fit—and I go to Poole, mind you, and pay him, too, which is more than every West-ender can say. He might have done the clothes right, at any rate."

What are you to say to this? The portrait is there before you, an utter failure. Your young friend the painter is one of those practitioners who may be said to have a fine eye for the Ugly. He does the thing before him, but the ugliest version of the thing. Every defect in the original is sought out and dwelt upon with intense relish. And you knew all this. But then he's such a good fellow, and doesn't get on particularly well, and you used to know his father:—all excellent reasons why your friend should be let in for a bad portrait. "I'll pay for it, mind you," says Civis as he takes leave of you, "but I'll never hang it up, nor show it to anybody."

As the worthy Civis has imparted this last intention a day or two before, to the man of genius himself, this last is not much better pleased with his sitter than his sitter is with him. "Of course it was very kind of you," says young Titian, "to recommend me and get me the job and that sort of thing, but upon my word that friend of yours is the most insufferable purse-proud snob I ever had any transaction with in the whole course of my life. Let me have a gentleman to deal with, and I don't care; but a tradesman—a man from the wrong side of Temple Bar—they're all alike! They would lord it over Michael Angelo if they had the chance."

So here is another instance of the failure of amateur touting. It is by no means the last that might be quoted. What do you do when your friend complains of his corns, and of the wonderful ideas entertained by shoemakers as to the form and size of the human foot? You instantly begin to chuckle, "Aha, my boy, you should go to *my* bootmaker, you'd never be troubled with corns any more. Go to *my* man, and be at peace." What follows? Your friend comes limping up to you a week or two afterwards, and informs you that, according to the verdict of an eminent chiropodist, he is likely to be lame for six months in consequence of an attempt to wear the shoes supplied by your shoemaker. And your shoemaker thanks you with the air of a martyr for having sent him a customer, but regrets that the gentleman has not behaved very handsome, sending back the shoes and declining to pay for them. "A pair of shoes, too," remarks the injured tradesman, exhibiting the articles in question, which resemble canoes, "a pair of shoes as ain't everybody's money, being made according to the gentleman's own design, with no shape in them."

But there is another form of amateur touting which must have a passing word of notice before the subject is dismissed. This time, it is your private friends whom you boast about, and you seek to cram them—as you did professional men and tradesmen—down the throats of your acquaintance. It is dangerous work.

Did you ever try to bring two people acquainted—being rather proud of each of them—and attain a successful result? Particular attention is requested to the wording of this question. It is not asked whether you succeeded in bringing those two persons to know each other, though that is often a performance with difficulties beset, but whether the result of the introductory ceremony was ever satisfactory.

I have said that you are rather proud of each of these friends separately. You think highly of them morally, intellectually, socially. You have spoken of each to the other as a fine fellow, one of the cleverest men you know, a man you have a sincere regard for. You have said that they will just suit each other, that they were made to be acquainted. In speaking of Arker to Booms, you have said that Arker is one of the most amusing fellows you ever knew, that there is a fund of dry humour about the man, that he is excellent company, a capital fellow to get at your table, a great talker, and never at a loss. In like manner, when you describe Booms to Arker, you are equally eloquent about the good qualities of Booms, which, however, are of a different sort. You say that Booms is a man of solid information, a deeply read fellow, a walking encyclopædia, "and yet," you add, "no man has a keener appreciation of a good thing than Booms, and then, my dear Arker, you and he do really think so very much alike on so many subjects, that I am continually reminded of each of you when I am with the other."

Now what have you done? In one word, you have simply set these two excellent individuals one against the other more completely than if you had abused Arker to Booms in the most ferocious manner, and set Booms before Arker as a monster in human form. I don't know how it is; I don't attempt to explain the phenomenon, but it is an unquestionable fact that we don't like to hear people whom we don't know, made a fuss about, and that we very soon weary of hearing Aristides—when he is not numbered among our acquaintances—called the just.

And now let us suppose that you do at last succeed in bringing about a meeting between Arker and Booms. It is only after innumerable false starts that you do succeed in this. Many times have you got together the very people whom you wanted to assist at the great introduction scene, but then unhappily either Arker or Booms would not come, and still this meeting which you have sought with feverish anxiety, to bring about, has not come off. At last, however, we will suppose you successful. Arker and Booms are both disengaged and will come. But, now your difficulties with regard to the other guests begin. The people who are wanted to fit in with Arker and Booms, the mutual friends, where are they? They are wanting. Some are ill; others out of town; and others engaged; and you are obliged to get all sorts of waifs and strays together and "make up a party," the members of which are all strangers to each other, and, above all, to your two principal guests. Also, on the day of your dinner-party, the wind is in the east. Arker has been engaged in a troublesome affair in the City, which is likely to involve him in loss, and Booms has the toothache. Your difficulties begin, before you leave the drawing-room. Arker has got it into his head that he is to take your wife down to dinner, and, after offering his arm, has to be disabused of his opinion, and to yield the palm to Booms, for whom the honour of conducting the lady of the house has been reserved.

And now, once seated at table, you hope that matters will begin to prosper a little. There is one subject on which you remember—and it is the only one—that your two illustrious friends hold strong opinions of a diametrically opposite nature. That subject is instantly started by Chipper: a little stop-gap whom you invited to fill a vacant seat. The subject is started, and out comes Booms with sentiments of the most uproarious kind, couched in the most uncompromising terms. You are in agonies—you listen with a feeble watchful smile—you don't hear what your next neighbour is saying to you, for you know that Arker cannot keep silence on this particular question of church-rates, and—to do him justice—he doesn't. After this, all goes wrong. Booms, your man of information, your walking encyclopædia, is at fault on the Schleswig-Holstein business, and Arker, your amusing man, your dry humorist, "so invaluable at a dinner-table," has a silent fit upon him, and, after contradicting Booms flatly about the church-rates, collapses altogether, and won't open his lips. When the party is over, your wife informs you that Mrs. Arker and Mrs. Booms were not

successful in pleasing each other in the drawing-room; and, in short, that it is a flat failure.

Or, it may be, that your efforts to bring Arker and Booms together, are productive of a result still more startling. This dear object of your heart, the union of these good people, is successfully brought about. They meet at your house, they take to each other. They exchange calls. Meetings are arranged, and parties made up, in which you are, at first, of course, included. At first—but not at last. For lo and behold! a day comes when the Arkers and the Boomses find their friendship is strong enough to stand alone, and no longer demand your fostering care, and at length the meetings and the junketings come off without your being present, and then it begins to be dimly borne in upon you that the Arkers have cut you out with the Boomses, or that the Boomses have cut you out with the Arkers, and that you have only your own delirious anxiety to make these people acquainted with each other, to thank for it.

And what is the upshot of all this? Are you never to recommend anybody under any circumstances, never to try to do a good turn to a friend who wants a little pushing, never to bring any of your neighbours, who are strangers to each other, together? These—cries the reader—are the principles of a cynic, a curmudgeon, a churl. They are and must be taken, like everything else, in moderation.

Extravagant pushing and touting, which are ordinarily thought to indicate friendly feeling and good nature, indicate sometimes one or two other things of a less noble nature. Very often there is something of egotism and vanity at the bottom of all this violent partizanship. *We* have taken up such and such a doctor, such and such an artist, and because *we* have done so, he must be pushed, though half our friends be poisoned, and the other half handed down to posterity as so many scarecrows. So and so, again, is *our* friend, therefore he must be worshipped. What! are we not discerning and clever beyond other men? If we have taken up these people, shall not others follow us? Then we most of us like popularity; and the approval and belief, even of our shoemakers and tailors, and their conviction that we have a large circle of affluent friends, is something worth trying for.

Nor must we forget that our amateur touting often brings harm instead of good on the person touted for. Wherever our poor friend Pukey goes, he denounces Bacon as the most ignorant and pretentious of all medical practitioners. Our friend, dissatisfied with that portrait which he has paid for, but which he cannot hang up—is he likely to sing the praises of Pigment, or will he not rather warn his friends against him, and that in the strongest phraseology?

Perhaps the safest rule to be observed in recommending, is, to wait till you are asked; or, at any rate, to behave—as has not been the case in any of the supposititious instances given above—with modesty and temperance. "Dr. Flook has done *me* a great deal of good: for so much I can vouch; Mr. Pigment has made a most excellent likeness of my wife; Gripper's shoes fit *me* with extraordinary comfort:" these are statements which you may make with great security—nay, *to* make them is probably one of the duties which you owe to that alarming Institution, Society.

ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

So Earl Russell called it in my passport—travelling "on the public service," nothing definite, nothing more. I had my instructions, of course, but they were, as they will remain, private. I had no uniform, like a courier, no sheepskin bag of documents, no despatch-box, nothing distinctive and immediately recognisable, like a Queen's messenger. On the public service I was to travel as one of the public, quietly making such inquiries as had been suggested to me, and quietly noting down the replies; but I was in no wise to give clue to my business, was not to produce my passport until it was asked for, and was to enter into no particulars as to the public service on which I was accredited. I had one consolation—that I afforded subject for an enormous amount of jesting on the part of those friends who knew that my mission lay in Hamburg, at that time the head-quarters of the German army marching on to Schleswig-Holstein. It was a part of the admirable humour of those wags to assume a belief in the premature closing of my earthly career, to take longing lingering farewells of me under the assumption that I should be taken for a spy, and either shot on the spot, after a drum-head court-martial, or immured for life in a Prussian fortress. I was christened "Major André." I was begged to read an account of the captivity at Verdun. One would gravely affirm that he had heard hanging was not really painful; another would advise me not to submit to the degradation of a handkerchief over my eyes, but to glare defiantly at the shooting-party; a third hoped I had a strong pocket-knife, because "people always bought those queer little things that the prisoners carved out of wood." I bore their sallies like a hero, and started by the night mail to Dover "on the public service."

Although the South-Eastern Railway has done its best to whirl me to that never-somnolent town, and although the Belgian mail-packet, advantaged by a splendid night, a favouring breeze, and a placid sea, has conveyed me thence to Ostend in very little more than four hours, I find, on disembarking at half-past three A.M., that our haste has been in vain, for the train does not start until after seven, and I have nearly four hours to get through. I am not prepared to say at what town in Europe I should prefer spending these four hours on a winter's night, but I am prepared to declare that certainly Ostend should not have my suffrages. Had it been summer I could have had some supper at one of the numerous quay-side restaurants, and then strolled round the town; or I could have walked on the Digue, or examined the

Phare, or bathed in the sea; but in January the quay-side restaurants are shut, and none of the other diversions are tempting. Nothing suggests itself but bed; so, mindful of old recollections, I determine to go to the Hôtel d'Allemagne, and, waving off touters, who, even at this dead hour of the night and season of the year, are vociferously to the fore, I stow myself into a one-horse omnibus, and mention my intended destination. The conductor of this omnibus suggests to me a reconsideration of my determination. That he should say anything against the Hôtel d'Allemagne, far be it! But he knows a better; one which, if he may use an English word, is bien comfortablement, one which is close at hand, and where mademoiselle (the other occupant of the omnibus) is about to descend. Will I not? No, I won't! the Hôtel d'Allemagne or nothing, and I pity mademoiselle, who descends at a not very attractive-looking porte cochère, as I think of Raymond and Agnes, and Mr. Wilkie Collins's Terribly Strange Bed, and many other unpleasant nights. But arriving at the Hôtel d'Allemagne, we find it fast closed, and all ringing and shouting are powerless to wake the inhabitants, so, much humiliated and crestfallen, I give in, and allow myself to be reconveyed to the bien comfortablement.

It is warm at the bien comfortablement, which is a great point on a bitter night; the stove is alight, the moderator-lamp shines brightly on the snowy tablecloth, and mademoiselle, who was deposited by the omnibus on its first journey, and who turns out to be a "young person in service," is talking unaspirated English to a big man, who came over in the fore-part of the steamer, and who is drinking hot brandy-and-water at a great rate. My hoarse friend, who has given up the omnibus, here puts in a spectral appearance at the door, and beseeches me to go to bed, promising to call me in the morning; so, dazed and tired, to bed I go, and as I creep between the coarse sheets, and rebound on the spring mattress, and see the foreign furniture, and smell the foreign smell, and vainly endeavour to cover myself with the foreign bedclothes, I bethink me of the time when I was a tall slip of a boy, eighteen years ago, and when, on my way to a German university, I passed my first night in foreign parts in this same city of Ostend. And so, lulled partly by these reflections, partly by the monotonous crooning of the voices of the young person in service, and the brandy-drinker in the next room, I fall asleep.

"'Sieu! 'sieu! cinq heures et d'mi, m'sieu." That recalled me to my senses, and I damped myself with the napkin, and placed as much of my nose and chin as it would contain into the pie-dish, and dressed myself, and arrived in the salon just as the breakfast I had ordered before I went to bed, was brought in by the waiter.

Princes, fools, and Englishmen, travel in the first-class carriages, says the German proverb: I know I am not a prince, but I am an Englishman, therefore one need not enter upon the other question, I think, as I take my first-class ticket. I am travelling "on the public service" now, so I ride in the first-class; on previous occasions I have ridden in the fourth-class, with fishwomen carrying strong-smelling baskets of Ostend produce, into the inland regions, and blue-bloused peasants in large-peaked caps, with all of whom I have held converse in the Flemish language—which I did not understand, but in which I made excellent progress by speaking a mixture of English and German with a Dutch accent. Now I sit in the first-class. I am certain there are no other Englishmen in the train, and I suppose there are no princes, and no fools, at such an early hour, for I am solitary and silent. On past Jabbeke and Bloemendael, jolly little neighbouring villages; on, through the flat well-cultivated Belgian country; on, past those dreary old châteaux, with the gabled roofs, standing far back, and looking so grim and desolate; on, past the white-faced little towns, through the high street of which our train tears, giving us passing glimpses of close-capped children screaming at the wooden bar which prevents them from hurling themselves on the line; on, until with a whistle and a shriek, we dash into Ghent, and pull up steaming beside the platform. Only one change at the Ghent station—no Englishman; no bundle of railway rugs, umbrella and sticks, waterproof coat, camp-stool, and red-faced Murray, shining like a star in the midst of them; no bowing commissionnaire conducting milor to his carriage; priests in big shovel-hats, fat-faced Flemish maidens; Ghent burghers, looking particularly unlike one's idea of Philip van Artavelde; porters, idlers, everything as usual, except the English travellers. So at Malines, where, as usual, we stop for half an hour's refreshment, I perceive the lack of English travellers; the buvette, where assemble the choice spirits of the third and fourth classes, is filled with roysterers drinking that mahogany-coloured beer with a white woolly froth, which is at once so nasty and so reminiscent of a pantomime beverage; but the first-class restaurant (so red-velvety, so gilded and looking-glassed, and artificial-flowered, and marble-tabled) has only three visitors: a Belgian officer in a grey overcoat, bright blue trousers and gilt spurs: a fat German, perpetually wetting the point of the pencil with which he is making notes: and myself. So, throughout the journey.

Passing Liège, the sun burst out, and the deep red cuttings, and the foaming waterfalls, and babbling rivulets, and bright green growth of what Thomas Hood aptly called the "lovely environs" of that grim smoke-begrimed city, glowed in his rays. Indeed, the weather continued so bright and genial that when we ran into Cologne, at half-past four, I could scarcely believe it was mid-winter. But when I stood, portmanteau in hand, at the railway station, I soon realised the fact! In the touring season the yard is filled with cabs and omnibuses; now, there are three wretched droschkies, driverless and badly horsed; then, you have to fight your way through a shrieking crowd of touters, eager

to bear you off to see the Dom, the shrine of the three kings, and the bones of St. Ursula's twelve thousand virgins; now, a solitary man, hinting at no sight to be seen, offers to carry my baggage to an inn. But I leave my traps at the station, and having two hours to pass before the starting of the train, I walk through the town, and find it indeed deserted. The big Rhine-bordering hotels are closed, half the Jean Marie Farinas have shut up their Eau-de-Cologne shops, while the other two hundred and fifty seem thoroughly unexpectant of custom: the Wechsel Comptoir (or money changers), whose ideas as to the current value of a sovereign are very vacillating, now have closed their shutters, and the itinerant photograph-sellers have fled. So I skulk back to the station, and there get a portion of a tough hare, and some red cabbage, and some kraut and potato salad, drink a bottle of Rudesheimer, and throw myself into the train and prepare for a night's rest.

I get it, with the exception of three rapid exits for refreshment purposes, at Minden, Hanover, and Lehrte. I sleep steadily on until half-past seven A.M., when we arrive at Harburg, our terminal station. Hamburg lies on the other side of the Elbe, and the passage of the river is made in summer by a steam-boat, but now the Elbe is frozen, and the crossing is long and difficult. As I am getting my portmanteau, I see a good-looking fresh-coloured boy in a huge fur cap standing, on the box of a droschky in the court-yard; he motions to me inquiringly, I respond, and next minute he has rushed up, has collared my portmanteau, has pushed me into his carriage, and is standing upon the box, whooshing and holloaing to his two mettlesome little steeds. Besides his fur cap, he wears a short sheepskin jacket, with the collar turned up round his face, thick breeches, and well-greased boots reaching to his knees. He has a large pair of fur gloves too, and a long whip, and a short cigar, and a great flow of animal spirits, which impels him jocosely to lay the whip across everybody he meets: shivering peasants with yokes carrying red pails, solemn douaniers, pompous post-couriers, sturdy farmers, fat burghers, all with their heads buried in their coat collars. In five minutes we arrive at the banks of the Elbe, where we have to wait a quarter of an hour until the steam-ferry is ready to receive us. The scene is desolate enough; the ice has begun to break up, but as yet has "given" but little; a bitter north-east wind skins the thin bald dreary landscape, flat and treeless; and the horses attached to the various carriages shiver and rattle their harness. The peasants have put off their yokes, and stamp up and down beside their red pails, the douaniers scowl over their pipes through the windows of the little toll-house, the post-courier slips on the frozen road and falls headlong, coming up again with a comic expression of ruffled dignity and a mouth full of strange oaths, and nobody seems happy save my fur-capped droschky boy, who, by dodging and whipping, has edged his carriage into the foremost rank. Then a shout announces that the steam-ferry is ready, and with heavy jolts and bumps we rumble on to it, carriages, horsemen, peasants, all closely packed together, with some twenty men in the bows armed with long iron-tipped poles to break up the solid, and push off the floating, ice. Steam is up, the fat little funnel throws out angry snorts, and we are off; but after two minutes come upon a solid mass of ice which defies our charge, and defies, too, all the prods of the pole-bearers: so we have to back and steer into another channel, through which, by dint of pushing off the floating icebergs, and after many weary stoppages, we arrive at the other side. Then down a long, long chaussée, with never-ending poplars on either side, bounded by a broad arm of the Elbe, so thoroughly frozen that we drive bodily over the ice, with no other difficulty, than the uncertain foothold of the horses; then another chaussée, straggling outskirts of a town, wooden bridges over canals, where broad-bottomed boats lay, like the larks and leverets in the pie immortalised by Tennyson, "embedded and enjellied," then through a handsome faubourg, along a broad road skirting an enormous sheet of water and bordered by handsome houses, and then pulled short up by the door of Streit's Hotel.

Very good is Streit, very handsome is his house, and very excellent is his accommodation, although by reason of my becoming tenant of the only disengaged room in the hotel I am mounted up very high, and my chamber has a dreary look-out into a back court-yard or flowerless garden. For Streit is full. At Streit's door I noticed two sentinels on guard, and in Streit's first floor are reposing princes of the land, who are thus guarded, and noble officers, the princes' staff. His Royal Highness of Prussia is chez Streit, and smaller Transparencies are billeted about in other mansions of this noble street, which is called the Jungfernstieg. A very short acquaintance with Streit proves to me that his visitors are principally military; lumbering men with clinking spurs, and huge overcoats, and sweeping moustaches, brush by me in the passages; and I am continually tumbling over the regular soldier-servant, he of the short hair, stiff gait, and ears sticking out on the side of his head, like the handles of a jug. I am disposed to believe that Streit imagines I, too, am military, when he hands me a letter from high authority which has been waiting my arrival, and which bears an enormous seal with the impression of the town arms, and has a strictly official and somewhat military appearance. Streit, I think, recognises the style of the address, but little wots Streit of the contents of this document, which enjoins me to return to England so soon as my necessary rest is accomplished. In his happy ignorance, and doubtless thinking that he has me his customer for days, Streit suggests my being tired and going to bed. But—though I don't confide this to Streit—I have only one day in which to see Hamburg, so I scorn his suggestion, and order breakfast. After a splendid bath—Streit has a very good

bath in his house—I descend, find an oasis of cups and plates in a desert of tablecloth (laid for the table d'hôte breakfast), and start out to explore.

The enormous lake in front of me, is the Alster Bassin, and no doubt, in summer when it is the grand resort of the Hamburgers, who, making up pleasant parties, float over its waters in painted boats, or booze and smoke in pavilion cafés on its banks, it is a delightful place. Now, however, it is one vast sheet of ice, on which the thaw is just beginning to take effect, for in the distance is seen a line of men, half a dozen paces apart, extending from shore to shore, busily engaged in breaking holes in the ice to admit the air, and so tend to its more speedy dissolution. In the comely gardens fringing the lake, I find nurse-girls and their charges, of course attendant soldiers, old gentlemen, evidently bent on "constitutionals," priests with bent heads hurrying to the service the bells inviting to which are now resonant, and little children scampering about—not unlike a foreign edition of St. James's Park, barring the ducks. Between the two Alster Bassins, the greater and the less, I cross over a barren strip of land, where there is a lock and a big windmill, brown and skeletony, and reminding one of the background of a sketch by Ostade, and on the other side I find a high road, and on the high road I find two horses, and on the horses I find two Austrian officers coming very much to grief, partly on account of the slippery state of the roads, and partly on account of their not having yet acquired the rudiments of equitation; for I take it that to pull a horse's nose on a level with his eye by the aid of a very sharp curb, and then to kick him in the flank with sharp-rowelled spurs, clutching meanwhile by anything permanent, is not the best way to keep a horse on his legs. Then across the Jungfernstieg into the shop-streets, where there is plate-glass, and gilding, and decoration, and lavish expenditure on every side. To eat, seems the great end of the Hamburger's life—to eat and so to enjoy. Not only are there large hotels, restaurants, conditorei or pastrycooks, and fruiterers in every street, but at every dozen doors you find a board announcing that in the basement, below the level of the pavement, is an oyster-cellar. "Austern und Frühstuck," Oysters and Breakfasts, that is the hospitable announcement of the signboard, and there do the fast young merchants congregate before they arrive at their counting-houses, and plunge so deeply into the many-lined, thinly-written, thin rustling leaves of letter paper, all relating to that "first of Exchange." These oyster-cellars are cool yet snug resorts, suggestive of pleasant and soothing alkaline waters, succulent bivalves, appetising anchovies and devilled biscuits; for your Hamburger has anything but poor brains for drinking, and could give your swag-bellied Hollander, and the rest of Cassio's friends, a long start and catch him easily. Likewise, as a new feature, do I notice at the doors of the restaurants, venison: not in its prepared and floured state—as with us—but in its natural state, skin on, horns, hoofs, severed jugular and all.

High change in Hamburg is at one o'clock. As it is rapidly approaching that hour, I make my way towards the Börse, and enter the building as it is beginning to fill. A handsome edifice this, with a large spiral hall in the centre, surrounded by a colonnade. Up-stairs, all sorts of little rooms, with names on the doors, merchants' offices like our London pattern at Lloyd's, and a big room, empty and locked, which, I am told, is the seat of the Chamber of Commerce. From below comes a roar of voices, and, looking down, I see the Hamburg merchants literally "at it." There they are, Hamburgers proper, rotund of body, heavy of jowl, fishy of eye, stubbly of hair, bushy of beard, thumb-beringed and hands-begrimed, listening and grunting; young Hamburg, blotchy, sodden, watery-eyed, strongly reminiscent of "last night," stung into business for business' sake, and for the sake of making more money for the encouragement of Veuve Cliquot, and Mumm, and Roederer, and Heidzecker, and other compounders of Sillery Sec and Pommery Greno; old Jewry, gabardined to the heels in fur, with cotton wool in its ears, screaming, yelling, checking off numbers in its interlocutor's face with skinny yellow fingers; young Jewry, with an avalanche of black satin round its throat, and a big brilliant diamond therein, cool, calm, specious, and a trifle oleaginous; middle-aged France, heaving in the waistband which props its rotund stomach under its double-chin, with scarcely any face to be seen between the rim of its fore and aft hat and the points of its gummed moustache; here and there, an Englishman, chimney-pot-hatted, solemn and awfully respectable; little olive-skinned Greeks, Russians in sable, and two Parsees in brown-paper headdresses. But the noise! It floods you, drenches you, soaks you through and through.

When I leave the Exchange it is past two o'clock, which I am glad of; but it is beginning to rain, which I am sorry for; Streit's table d'hôte does not take place until four, and I must fain walk about, dreading the thoughts of my dreary bedroom looking on the back yard. So I walk about, and look at the church of St. Nicholas, which is one of the best Gothic triumphs of our own great architect, Mr. Gilbert Scott, and I bend my neck very far back indeed endeavouring to see the spire of St. Michael's, and I visit the Rathhaus and am not impressed thereby, and I inspect the promenading female beauty, with the same result: for the Hamburg females are neither better nor worse looking than the majority of their German sisters, and have the coarse hair, and the dull thick skins, and the coarse hands, and the elephantine ankles, for which your Deutsches Madchen is renowned. They seem to find favour, though, in the eyes of the Prussian and Austrian officers, who are everywhere, and who ogle them in the true military manner; but the maidens do not respond, and only halt in their walk to contemplate occasional regiments marching by, with the invariable accompaniment of

vagabond boys and men. But the rain now comes down so smartly that I can walk about uncovered no longer, and am making my way to Streit's, when out of the Jungfernstieg I turn into an arcade, full of such shops as in such places are generally to be found, and here I while away my time. Jewellers, first; I do not care to stare in at jewellers' windows in England; I seem to myself like a hungry urchin at a pastrycook's, longing after the tarts, but that rule does not hold here, and so I stare my fill, noticing all the curly snakes with ruby eyes and turquoise tails, the rings and pins, the hair-brooches (the Germans are tremendous at these, and there were shoals of those very gummy wavy hair-willow trees bent over little black tombs, with the gilt wire adjustment plainly visible), the thin little French watches, the fat German turnips, the montres Chinoises (Chinese watches, made in Geneva), with one long thin hand perpetually turning round, and rendering hopeless any attempt to tell the time; the ear-rings, the enormous gold skewers, arrows, hoops, arcs, shells and knobs for the hair. Printsellers: the place of honour occupied by the late Mr. Luard's pictures of "Nearing Home" and the "Welcome Arrival," and Mr. Brooks's pretty sentimentalisms of empty cradles and watching wives; close by these, and in excellent keeping, a French artist's notion of the English in Paris: English gentleman in a suit of whity-brown paper, green plaid cloth tops to his boots, a pointed moustache, and a very fluffy hat (how they *do* catch our peculiarities in dress, don't they?), saying to a lady, lovely, but perhaps a trifle free: "Voulez accepter le cœur de *moa?*" in itself an excellent joke; many pictures of encounters between the Prussians and the Danes in 1848, in which the latter are always getting the worst of it, and a notable print, "Seeschlacht bei Eckenford" (Sea-fight at Eckenford), which sea-fight apparently consists of a Danish ship running aground, and the Germans running away. Then, a bookseller's; covered all over with their little copies of "Die Londoner Vertrag" (the London Treaty of 1852), with numerous French and German books, and some gaudy coloured English works, one of which, I am inclined to think by its title, "Daddy Goriot, or Unrequited Affection," cannot be entirely original, but may have some connexion with a French gentleman, one Honoré de Balzac, deceased. Then a photographer's; where I am refreshed at finding what I, of course, have never seen in my own land—carte de visite portraits of the Prince and Princess of Wales, also of Herr von Bismark the great Prussian firebrand, also of Fraulein Delia and Fraulein Lucca, great operatic stars, in all kinds of costume; also the portrait of a gentleman, with parti-coloured cheeks, a cock's-comb head-dress and fantastic dress, with a legend underneath, stating it to be the effigy of "Herr Price, Clown, Circus Renz."

A lengthened tour of inspection of this arcade, and a chat with the tobacconist of whom I buy some cigars, brings me close to four o'clock, when Streit rings his bell for table d'hôte, and I find myself one of half a dozen civilians, all the rest of the guests being Austrian and Prussian officers. When they find I am a foreigner (they think I am a Russian) these gentlemen are very polite, including me in their conversation, clinking glasses with me, &c., while they scowl upon the civilians of their own country, and take no notice of them. The conversation turns upon the part played by England in this war, and I have the satisfaction of hearing my country and its ministers very roundly abused: so roundly, that at length I declare my nationality and receive all sorts of apologies from my friends, who deprecate any idea of personality, but who still decry our English policy, and who tell me that the unpopularity of England throughout Germany is terrible. In due course after which, I take my candle and go to bed, having to be up at daybreak, to start once more on the public service.

THE MAGICIAN'S SERVANT.

Abou-Ben-Ali was a great magician,
A wonder-working wizard, feared and dreaded.
Deep in a lonely lane of Cairo old
Your dreary way unto his house you threaded.

Out by the Desert gate, a lonely part,
Hid among gardens and deserted fountains,
It stood, and from the roof-top you could plainly see
The Pyramids rising like sapphire mountains.

A great blind house with windows closely matted,
Save where the water-bottle was suspended,
To catch the outer air; how bare it crouched
In sunless twilight that was never ended.

Past a deserted mosque and drug bazaar,
Where the rich myrrh diffused a mystic fragrance,
And near a tall but shattered minaret,
From whence a vulture watched some sleeping vagrants.

The Leper Hospital was near its garden there,
The lolling gourds unheededly grew yellow,
And date-trees held beyond one's reach the fruit,
In bunches that all Egypt could not fellow.

And by its plaster wall a beggar sat—
Blind Hadji—droning o'er his Koran verses,
While his lean dog sat looking in his face,
Like critic at a poet who rehearses.

Hard by a fountain, bountiful as he
Who wrote above the tap those lines in Persian,
Half-naked urchins played at pilgrimage,
Or of the Nile-songs gave the newest version.

And no one but a half-crazed dervish passed,
Bowing to nothing; with a long cane flapping
Upon his bony shoulders, and a bowl
That with a broken flute he still kept rapping.

There were no women peeping from the roof,
No black slaves at the threshold grinned or cackled,
No sound of lute or hands that beat in time,
No rose-striped curtains o'er the court-yard tackled.

Only a dreary round of sullen rooms,
All bare but for a cushion or some matting;
A lamp before a niche, a bowl or two,
And piles of books in Syriac, Greek, and Latin—

Coptic and Arabic, Armenian too,
With here and there a Talmud, and a treatise
On the Cabala or the Mysteries,
In old Egyptian, which to wizards sweet is.

An ivory rod, a skull or two of Pharaohs',
That answered questions if examined rightly,
Huge chests of poisons, stupifying drugs,
And the brown incense crushed for burning nightly.

But I had quite forgot; there was one room
Paved and walled in with mummies, brown and sable,
The very ceiling mummies; a gilt coffin case
Served as old Abou-Ali's study table.

And each one down the long and level line,
Held out its stiffened arm, as if in warning,
And staring stood like yawning sentinel,
Waiting the trumpet of the judgment morning.

All Egypt's rank and beauty withered up
Was there in audience; in the neighbouring chamber,
The walls with spheres and stars were blazoned thick,
With silver moons, and suns of gold and amber.

And the last room, most terrible of all,
Was roofed with dead men's eyes; each withered jewel
Some alchemist had charred in search of spells,
And turned its diamond light to cindered fuel.

The only guardian of this awful house
Was Hassan, foolish son of an old weaver,
A gaping, prying, idle, thoughtless dolt,
A fingering, tipsy, lazy, hair-brained thiever.

In shuddering curiosity he roamed
From room to room, eying each mighty folio,
Pinching the mummies, sniffing at the drugs,
Eager to see the whole of that great olio.

Ali was in the desert, sifting out
From scorpions' holes and vultures' nests a powder,
Of great intensity of poison; all alone
Was Hassan, who grew hourly lazier, prouder.

The old Jew's daughter last week ran away,
The cobbler by the fountain lay bedridden,
The slipper-seller was tied up at home,
And for his idling being sorely chidden.

First from the door, and then the window looked
That monkey Hassan, dreading most his master;
Then to the mummy room in mischief swift,
Heedless of woe, and careless of disaster.

Out came the special book, a parchment tome,
Open the special leaf—the lamp was nourished
With magic oil of mummies' tongues, and lo!
He seized the rod that Abou-Ali cherished.

And read the potent words, and bade Aldeboron
To save him toil, go fetch the sweet Nile water,
Some three full pails, and this in Satan's name,
And great Taxana's, his dear eldest daughter.

Then spread a demon laugh among the dead,
That made his hair rise, as a mummy springing
Leaped from the room, forced by that wondrous spell,
In spite of all the other mummies to him clinging.

Back with the water-pails, and swilling out
Over the floor in streams the Nile flood courses;
Back with the slopping pails, with all the speed
And strength of ten untiring, untamed desert horses.

An inundation all before its time—
Alas! the fool is like a wild duck swimming,
And every moment higher floats the tide,
And all the ground floor now is full and brimming.

Swish, wash, and gurgle, bubble, ripple, rush,
It rises to the waist of frightened Hassan,
Nay, to the chin, in vain he's shouting out,
"Stay, goblin, stay, you're surely no assassin!"

The books are gone, all swept off by the flood;
He splashes, tumbles, swims, and swimming clamours,
But yet the laughing goblin at his toil
Continues, till poor Hassan fainter stammers:

"Stop, stop; give me the book. I'm drowning, man;
Stop, or you'll kill me. Save me, prophet sainted—
Save me, Mohammed"—in his ears and mouth
The cruel water rushed, and then he fainted.

* * * * *

When he awoke, within the baled out room
Stood Abou Ali, his wrath lord and master,
Beating him with a palm-stick, as the cause
Of all this desolation and disaster.

"Another time, you blockhead," Ali said,
"Before you read the spell that starts the goblin,
Learn that which lays him;" here he fell again
To thrashing him, with energy redoubling.

Then stripped him of his turban, gay and yellow,
And of his robe and sash, without remorse or pity,
And by the shoulders took him, and with kicks
Dismissed him, howling, from the sacred city.

PROMOTERS OF COMPANIES.

Not many months ago, I was doing my best to obtain employment in London. "Beggars must not be choosers," and I was determined to accept any appointment I could get, provided I thought myself tolerably competent to fulfil the duties of the situation. One morning, when looking over the Times, the following advertisement caught my eye:

"WANTED, for a first-class Joint-Stock Company, a SECRETARY.—Apply, by letter, stating what salary is expected, and giving references, to A. L., 109, Little Green-street, E.C."

Within half an hour of my having read this, I had written and posted a letter addressed to "A. L.," and had told that personage I was in want of exactly such an appointment as he described in his advertisement; that, as regarded salary, I must be allowed to learn what duties were expected of me before I could state the amount of payment I should require; that, in any case, I thought we should not quarrel about terms; lastly, I gave the names of two or three gentlemen in London, to whom I could refer as regarded my character, capabilities, &c.; in conclusion, I begged to know the name of the "first-class Joint-stock Company" that was in want of a secretary?

To my surprise, I did not get an answer for three days, and, when it came, the letter gave me so little information that I inclined at first to have nothing more to say either to "A. L."

or his secretaryship. The very names both of "A. L." and his "first-class Joint-stock Company" were still hidden from me, the writer merely telling me that the company in want of a secretary was "one of the very first in London," and finishing his very short communication by asking whether, in the event of my obtaining the situation, I should "be prepared to lay down the sum of five hundred pounds sterling?"

To this, I replied that, as far as the money was concerned, I had friends who were ready to advance such a sum on my account, provided the situation I obtained was of such a kind as to give me an income of not less than three hundred a year in a respectable public company. But that I should take no more steps in the matter, nor would I answer any more letters, unless I was at once furnished with full particulars of the proposed secretaryship, and was at once made acquainted with the real name of "A. L.," and with the means by which he proposed to obtain the appointment for me.

In twenty-four hours after despatching my letter, I received a long official-looking envelope, which contained a letter signed by "A. L.," in what he informed me was his real name—Alfred Long—and also the printed prospectus of a new joint-stock company, of which more presently. Mr. Alfred Long informed me that he was the "promoter" of this proposed company, but that "to bring it out" he required the sum of five hundred pounds for advertising and other expenses; and that if I or my friends would advance that amount, he would give me what he called "a written bond" that I should be appointed secretary of the company, at a salary of not four but five hundred a year. The printed prospectus was magnificent. The company was for the purpose of providing London with gas on an entirely new plan, which would—so the prospectus said—at once and for ever crush all existing gas companies. The capital required was three millions sterling, in sixty thousand shares of fifty pounds each, one pound per share to be paid on application; and the interest the company would pay when at work, could not by any possible combination of circumstances be less than fifty per cent per annum, while there was every chance of its increasing in a few years to a hundred, and even a hundred and fifty. In the body of the prospectus were several certificates from eminent chemists and others, all stating that this peculiar gas—I do not mention its particular name—was two hundred per cent cheaper, and gave a hundred per cent stronger light, than any gas now in use, and that its adoption by any town could not fail to prove highly remunerative to those who furnished it. To this were added several columns of figures proving—or intending to prove—that whereas the gas now used in London cost so many thousands to produce, the proposed kind costing so much less, the result must be so many hundreds of thousands of pounds profit for the company.

In short, nothing could be more magnificent—on paper—than this scheme; but, as I remarked when answering Mr. Alfred Long's letter, I questioned very much whether a company in which there were as yet neither directors, solicitors, bankers, brokers, nor shareholders, was exactly the thing which could properly be termed "a first-class Joint-stock Company," and that, although I wished the scheme every success, I must decline having anything more to do with it.

Here I thought the whole affair would end, and that I should hear no more of Mr. Alfred Long or his gas company. To my surprise, I received another letter by return of post from that gentleman, in which he begged I would not, for my own sake, be rash and throw aside the chance of becoming secretary of what would no doubt some day be one of the very first public companies in London, if not in the world; that I was quite mistaken regarding there being no board of directors formed for the company, because he had some of the very "first men in the City" ready to join the direction at once; but that there were several preliminary expenses to be incurred before the publication of the whole prospectus could take place; that these gentlemen had given him their names in confidence, but that so soon as ever he could meet certain necessary expenses, the whole affair would be brought out, and that then it would be too late to apply for the secretaryship, for there would be so many men of wealth and influence seeking the situation, that it would be impossible for him to offer it to me. His own capital was locked up, but if I would advance the sum of two hundred pounds at once, he would take my bond for the balance of three hundred, to be paid the day the company was in full operation. The letter was well written, and there was a cool audacity about the fellow asking me to advance this amount of coin on a scheme so visionary, that I determined, if possible, to see what kind or manner of man it was who could believe any one, idiot enough to pay money, with so very remote a chance of ever—or rather with the certainty of never—seeing it again. I therefore replied to his letter that there was, no doubt, some truth in what he said about not throwing away the chance of a good situation, but that before I could take any steps in the affair, I must have a personal interview with him, Mr. Alfred Long; that he had only to name the hour and place when he would meet me in the City; and I would be sure to keep the appointment.

To this proposition I received an answer, saying that the writer, Mr. Long, was very unwell, but that his friend, Mr. Adam, would meet me the following day at noon, at a certain tavern in Cheapside. On receipt of this note, I became more than ever determined to see Mr. Long himself. I therefore replied that my business was with Mr. Long, and not with Mr. Adam; that if the former were unwell, I could wait a few days; but that I would cease all correspondence on the subject, unless within the next week or ten days I saw and spoke to Mr. Alfred Long.

The letter which reached me by return of post surprised me not a little, although I had by this time conceived very high notions of Mr. Alfred Long's boldness in finance. His epistle was long, and took a very round-about way of coming to the point: which was to announce that he had been for some six months in Whitecross-street prison for debt, but that if I would favour him with a call, he had no doubt that matters would be explained entirely to my satisfaction. To Whitecross-street prison I accordingly went. On my inquiring for Mr. Long, a corpulent clerical looking man, aged about sixty, and with the general appearance of an insolvent archdeacon, came forward to greet me. He did not waste time, but plunged at once into business, bringing forth piles upon piles of documents, both written and printed, to prove that the new gas scheme was beyond all doubt "the very best thing" that had been brought forward by any joint-stock company for many years, and that all who took shares would be certain to make their fortunes. He told me a long story how he had been arrested for "a mere trifle; less than fifty pounds, sir," and how he hoped, with a portion of the two hundred which I was to advance, to set himself free, and, within a week, to establish the "first-class Joint-stock Company," with its three millions of capital. To this I objected that, under present circumstances, I did not see my way clearly towards advancing any money, and that before doing so I must consult with friends who would no doubt object to my taking any steps in the affair until I had some knowledge as to the composition of the future board of directors of the great gas company. This, not very unreasonable, objection Mr. Long met by asserting that the board was already filled up, and that "some of the leading men in the City, sir," were only waiting for him to say he was ready, in order to lend their names at once to the scheme. I suggested that it might be better, perhaps, if some of these "leading men in the City" were, among them, to advance the two hundred pounds, and so release Mr. Long from prison, as well as set the proposed scheme on its legs. To capitalists like them, I urged, the loss of a couple of hundred pounds amongst them would be a mere nothing, whereas to a very poor man like me it would be almost ruin. But Mr. Long did not see things in that light. He said I did not understand these sort of affairs, that it would never do for him to ask these leading City men for the insignificant sum of two hundred pounds, and that I was decidedly standing in my own light by not risking so little to gain so much. He ended by saying, if I could not lay my hand on the money at once, my "acceptance at three months" would do nearly as well, for he could get it discounted through a friend of his. But I objected that I never wrote my name across stamped paper, and upon that we parted.

Mr. Alfred Long was the first "promoter" with whom I became acquainted, and he was not the least singular man I have met, in his notions as to the way of getting up a "first-class Joint-stock Company." I don't think he was altogether dishonest, although certainly not the sort of person I would name in my will as trustee for my widow and children. He seemed to have talked and written himself into a belief of his own falsehoods, and to have an idea that the rest of the world was as easy to deceive. I have never seen or heard more of Mr. Alfred Long. We parted good enough friends, though he warned me that I would repent having thrown such a chance away. However, I have not yet seen his gas company advertised in the Times, although it is not long since I thought I recognised, under different initials, the advertisement that a secretary for a "first-class Joint-stock Company" was still wanted.

"If you really want to get the secretaryship of a public company," said a friend of mine, who is a merchant in the City, "I'll introduce you to Mr. Hunter: a most respectable man, who is a promoter of new schemes. He is sure to have something on hand that will suit you, and I have no doubt that you and he can come to terms." My friend was himself far too honourable a man to have anything to do with those who were otherwise, so I thankfully accepted his offer, and was introduced to Mr. Hunter: whose profession, as my introducer told me, was that of a "promoter," but who was a very different sort of person from my acquaintance in Whitecross-street. Mr. Hunter had an office of his own. It is true the said office—situated in a dismal dingy court somewhere behind Austin Friars—consisted of only one room, and that room up three steep flights of stairs; nevertheless it *was* an office, in which was a clerk—age, I should say, about fourteen years—and in both his clerk and his office Mr. Hunter seemed to take great pride. He could not talk on any subject for five consecutive minutes, without mentioning either "my clerk" or "my office:" though he appeared to make little or no use of the one, and to confine himself not more than forty minutes, during the whole working hours of the day, to the other.

Although Mr. Hunter was by profession and calling a "promoter," I don't think he made much by his proposed schemes. One of three things seemed always to happen to him: either he could not get together directors enough to bring out a new company; or else he got too many, and could not get rid of some without offending them; or, at the eleventh hour some other person got hold of his scheme, and brought it out, as he used to lament, "over my head, sir." Thus, the idea of the "Anglican Gallic and German Bank (limited)," had originated with this unfortunate gentleman. He it was who worked out the plan for months, and just as he had got a board of good men together, a treacherous friend saw the prospectus of the proposed bank, changed its name to the "English, French, and Saxon Banking Corporation (limited)," got a board of directors, solicitors, bankers, brokers, and secretary, together in a single forenoon, brought out the affair next day

in the Times, Daily Telegraph, Morning Post, Daily News, and all the other morning papers, and pocketed a thousand pounds by way of what is called "promotion money." Thus poor Mr. Hunter was left with his fiasco of a scheme, and the dubious gratification of paying for the printed prospectus.

When I first became acquainted with Mr. Hunter, his greatest trouble used to be his having, not too little, but too much, money at command. He was the first and only man I ever knew who felt annoyed by being too wealthy. He used to complain that the government of—I really forget whether it was Brazil, Peru, or the Argentine Republic — a South American state—had commissioned him to procure a loan of eight millions sterling, and that after he had negotiated the affair and got it all right, they wrote to say they only wanted five millions. "What to do with the other three millions I am sure I don't know, sir," he used to repeat three or four times every day. It was in vain I suggested that a few thousands, or even a few hundreds, might be carefully employed as a loan to himself, for I could not help seeing that poor Mr. Hunter's means were often like the shares of the joint-stock companies which he promoted—limited. Even in so small a matter as postage-stamps I had often to help him, and I could not but be cognisant —though I pretended entire ignorance — of sundry sulky visitors who from time to time called at the office, and asked whether "Mr. 'Unter was a going to settle that 'ere small bill, or whether they"—the speakers' employers, I presume—"should have to county court him?"

But, with all this, I believe Mr. Hunter to be an honest and honourable man. My own business with him was confined to procuring him the names of four "good City men" as directors for the board of a joint-stock company he was then forming; and my share of the loaves and fishes was to be, that if it were brought out I was to get the secretaryship. The company was not brought out, and therefore I did not get the secretaryship. In less than a week I had the names of "four good City men," who were willing to join the company as directors, provided the rest of the board was composed of respectable men. These Mr. Hunter had to find, but he never managed to find them. Somehow or other, no sooner did he get four gentlemen to consent to come upon his board, than three of them discovered that the fourth was "worth nothing, a mere man of straw," and so they at once resigned, and joined some rival scheme. These were the days—not long ago—when every morning's paper was certain to bring forth some new prospectus of a Joint-stock Bank, or a Finance and Credit Association. Poor Mr. Hunter felt that, while the grass was growing all around him, he, the horse, was starving. However, he never lost courage or hope. Every morning when I visited his office he had some new combination by which he was certain to have "a first-rate board formed before Saturday;" but week after week passed by and nothing came of it, and to this day I believe he is working hard to bring out his scheme. Occasionally, but very seldom, Mr. Hunter would have small windfalls in the way of cash, or, at any rate, would receive—I don't know whence, or from whom—small sums of money, which he would parade ostentatiously. On such occasions he would always insist upon repaying me any money I had expended for postage-stamps, bitter beer, luncheons, or such like: of all of which he kept a very rigid account, and, indeed, I believe I am his debtor to the amount of sevenpence. I am afraid Mr. Hunter does not prosper. I wish him every success in life, but fear his means are not increasing. However, I met him a very few days ago in the City, when he told me he was on the point of bringing out a new scheme, so great, and with so large a capital, that the bare recital of the project took my breath away. The promoter's fees alone would amount—so Mr. Hunter said—to upwards of three thousand pounds, and the sole promoter of the concern was Mr. Hunter. But I have not yet seen the prospectus advertised in the Times, and as the information was given me in confidence, I must not allude to it further.

The next practitioner in the promoter line with whom I became acquainted, was a gentleman of quite a different kind from Mr. Alfred Long, and from Mr. Hunter too.

Mr. Hardy—for that was his name—had in appearance the combined characteristics of the guardsman and the stockbroker. His hat, shirt collar, scarf, pin, coat, trousers, boots, and umbrella, were undeniably and unmistakably West-endish; his moustache, whiskers, and gloves would have passed muster in the Household Brigade, or at Aldershot. Yet he had about him, habits and customs which savoured strongly of Capel-court. Thus, when once he was in the City, his umbrella was laid aside in his office, his gloves were taken off and crushed up together in one hand, he did not walk, but rushed from place to place, and in the hand which did not hold the gloves, there were always three or four papers: one of which was certain to be a crossed cheque for a large amount—nothing under three figures at least. And yet Mr. Hardy was not a stockbroker, or a stockjobber, or a solicitor, or a merchant, or an accountant; he was simply and solely a promoter. His offices consisted of two light airy convenient rooms, for which he must have paid a rent of at least two hundred a year. They were handsomely furnished and well warmed. In the outer room, were two clerks—a young man and a boy; in the inner apartment Mr. Hardy was always—when not engaged in running about the City with a crossed cheque in his hand — closeted with some mysterious personage. The first time I saw Mr. Hardy was in this wise. I had written to him, enclosing a letter of introduction from a mutual friend, asking on what day, and at what hour, I might call upon him to speak on a matter of business. The answer was, that if I called the next day but one, "at two o'clock precisely," Mr. Hardy would be glad to see me.

At five minutes before the hour, I was at his office, and sent in my card, through the clerk, who came back into the outer room, saying, Mr. Hardy was particularly engaged, but would see me in five minutes. I waited nearly half an hour, when the bell summoned the clerk, who returned and ushered me into the sanctum of the great promoter. The latter greeted me with, "Now, my dear sir, I can only give you ten minutes, as I have three special meetings to attend before five o'clock." He made notes of what I had to say, at the same time eating his luncheon of biscuits and sherry, of which he asked me to partake. Before the ten minutes were half over, he had appointed another interview for me, and had politely bowed me out. Almost as soon as I got into the street, I saw him rushing across, his gloves crumpled up in one hand, and several papers (one of which, I believe, was a cheque) in the other.

Mr. Hardy was a prosperous man, but how he ever got through any real business by hurrying and rushing about the City, was always matter of wonder to me. And yet, he must have found the profession of promoter, lucrative, else how could the office-rent, the clerks' salaries, and his own dress be paid for? Or, whence could the crossed cheques have come? He showed me from time to time—always in strict confidence—two or three of his different schemes; and I am bound to say that—unlike the proposed prospectuses of poor Mr. Hunter—sooner or later, these invariably appeared in the advertising columns of the Times, Post, Telegraph, and Daily News. These advertisements alone must have cost him a fortune, though, I presume, that when a company "came out," the amount he had expended was repaid him. On one occasion, I was sitting with him in his inner room, when the elder of his two clerks asked for a cheque for the advertising of the "Columbian Banking Corporation:" a new scheme, of which the immensely long prospectus had appeared for the first time in all the morning papers of that day. "How much does it come to?" asked Mr. Hardy. "Four, six, one, and fifteen, sir," answered the clerk. "Write it out and bring it me to sign," said Mr. Hardy, taking his cheque-book out of a drawer, and tossing it over to the clerk. In five minutes the clerk came back with a cheque filled in for four hundred and sixty-one pounds, fifteen shillings, which his master signed, still continuing his conversation with me, and with far less care than I should have bestowed on the signing of a cheque for five pounds. I asked Mr. Hardy—for by this time I knew him better—whether all that sum was for the advertising of one single scheme? He replied that it was, and for one single day, too. That before a company was brought out, or rather before the distribution of its shares took place, between two and three thousand pounds were generally expended in advertisements, which simply published the names of the directors and the prospectus of the scheme. That if the proposed company does not "take" with the public, or if the shares are not all applied for, and if—in the language of the City—"the scheme won't float," all the expenses that have been incurred fall upon the promoter, who is, consequently, often a considerable loser by an affair of the kind. The profession of promoter is, however, something like the African slave trade, in which those who engage in the business can afford to lose three or four cargoes, provided one in every four succeeds in getting safe to Havannah, so great is the profit upon a shipload of negroes that arrives safe at its destination. Moreover, an experienced promoter takes care, as a general rule, not to bring forward a joint-stock company unless he is pretty sure that the shares will be taken up.

As a matter of course, the promoter is sometimes mistaken, and for some unknown reason or other, neither the public nor the Stock Exchange will have anything to do with an undertaking which promises well for those who join it; while, on the other hand, bubbles and swindles often find favour with the multitude, and are quoted at a premium, even before the shares are allotted. Much, however, depends upon the names of the directors who form the board. If these are "good City men," men known to be wealthy, or belonging to wealthy firms—or if even three or four of them be so reputed—almost any scheme will "float" well: which means, that its shares will be readily applied for, and quickly bought up, by the public. It is not, however, those companies which come out at the highest premiums that may be considered as the best or safest investments for money. On the contrary, some of those which, for a time, command little or no premium, have often the best boards of direction, and are the safest in the long run. Between the period when a new joint-stock company is first advertised, and the day when no more applications for shares are received, the promoters of the scheme often do their best to run up the scrip by fictitious buying and selling—"rigging the market," as it is called—of the future shares, by means of two or three stockbrokers, who act upon orders, and create a demand for the new stock. Thus, if the "Columbian Banking Corporation" prospectus appeared in the advertising columns of the Times for the first time on Monday morning, it is very likely that the shares would be quoted in the City articles of the evening papers as being at two-three-quarters to two-seven-eighths premium. In other words, any one who had any shares of the said "Columbian Bank" allotted to him, might sell them—or rather might sell even the promise of them—at a premium of two pounds fifteen shillings to two pounds seventeen shillings and sixpence each. Now, as the deposit that has to be paid upon each share before application, is only one pound, the outside public reason with themselves that the speculation cannot be a bad one; for it is hardly possible—so they think—to lose the one pound deposit, whereas they have a good chance of winning nearly three pounds on each share. The theory of this is good, but the practice often otherwise.

The scheme may be an excellent one, the directors may be all "good City men," and yet the shareholders may take fright, and themselves ruin their own prospects. For, when they no longer see the scheme in which they have taken shares, quoted at a premium—a premium which their own common sense should tell them must be, more or less, a sham—they at once rush to sell their shares, and thus themselves depreciate their own property. If the public would exercise judgment before they buy shares, and patience after their purchases are made, they would do much better than by taking alarm at the first depreciation that happens to the stock in which they have invested. So doing, they help, as it were, to burn down their own property, and in effecting their own ruin.

CAPTAIN BLUENOSE.

"GREAT news, glorious news! Victory! The Danes are falling back! Flensburg has been taken. Flensburg has hoisted the German colours. Hoch liebe Deutschland!" bawled a hundred voices at once, and the bells in the church tower rang out their merriest peal, while the little village was decked with ribands and boughs and flowers, as gaily as for a fair. There were crowds in the straggling street; and, from the open windows of most of the houses, hung out the gaudy German flag, the tricolor of the Fatherland. Young and old wore cockades and rosettes of the national colours, and had joyous faces and busy tongues. For the village of Steerup, on the direct road from the strong fortress of Flensburg to the little harbour of Kappel, is a village in which the Germans outnumber the Danes in a proportion of at least three to one.

"May Nip and Nock throttle the noisy swine!" growled the old man who walked by my side, and who, like myself, found his progress so much impeded by the gesticulating groups in front of every beer-house and tavern, that his usual swinging stride was reduced to a slow step. "Let us turn up this lane to the left, Mr. Harry, and get clear of the traitorous crew. This is no place for a Dane. If I had but a couple of guns charged with grape——"

"Halloa, Captain Bluenose! you seem out of sorts! Learn to change with the times, old sailor; cast your Danish skin, as the snakes do in summer, and come forth in sprucer guise as a true patriot and a Schleswiger. Here is a pot of the best beer Rostock ever brewed, in which to drink the freedom of Schleswig-Holstein," broke in a half-tipsy German, advancing towards my guide, and holding out a tankard invitingly, while his companions set up a jeering laugh; for they knew the old "skipper's" Danish sentiments too well to doubt the reception which such a proffer would meet with from him. Indeed, a scuffle seemed more than probable, when a sudden shout of "Here they are: here they come!" and a rush on the part of the throng to some safe place—such as the gateways of yards, or the mouths of lanes and alleys—cut short the threatened quarrel, and my curiosity kept me in the village street, while the old man, muttering curses on the mutineers, remained at my side. We heard the roll of drums and the heavy tramp of marching men, and strained our eyes towards the Flensburg road, whence a cloud of dust began slowly to whirl along before the light summer breeze. What we were about to see was no doubtful spectacle. The Danish troops, beaten back at all points by the weight of superior numbers, were retreating towards the islands, and a column of infantry was to pass through Steerup; the artillery, cavalry, and baggage, with the bulk of the army, being sent along the broader causeway that traverses Hollebul. The Prussians and the insurrectionary army of Schleswig-Holsteiners had already occupied the principal towns of the duchy, and the Isle of Alsen was spoken of as the probable refuge of the overmatched Danes.

On they came, marching regularly enough, and preserving a martial aspect; but, for all that, the sight was a melancholy one. There was a gloomy expression on the faces of the beaten soldiers, but it varied much. Some looked sullenly downwards, as if unwilling to catch the eye of any spectator of their disaster, others stared defiantly at the unsympathising faces of the bystanders, and a few preserved a bright bold look, as of men who had done their best, and who had only succumbed to odds that no courage could cope with. Many were wounded, having a bloody handkerchief tied around their brows, or wearing an arm in a sling, and some were footsore, or lamed by slight gun-shot hurts, and had to limp painfully to keep up with the rest. The drums beat, and the colours fluttered; but there was a funereal sadness about the pageant; and, by the dark looks of the Danes, I could see that they knew they were passing through a crowd of ill-wishers.

Still, if no cheer, no friendly word, greeted the retiring troops, it is equally certain that no actual insult was offered to them. Not a villager spoke above breath. Indeed, the men kept back, though the women pressed forward as if to show the breast-knots and fluttering streamers of the German colours, and the Schleswig-Holstein rosettes, that they wore. The bells in the church tower had ceased their clangour; but, of course, the flags still flaunted from roof, and spire, and casement, and wherever the Danes cast their eyes they were met by signs of mute hostility. The discipline of the troops, and the temper of their chiefs, were such as surprised me. Without a threat, or a menacing gesture, they pushed steadily on; though once I saw a tall officer, whose arm was in a sling and bandaged, look up at the gaudy banner, red, black, and gold, that flapped on the church tower, and clutch his drawn sword the tighter with his uninjured hand, as he bent his head and strode on. And, when the Danish rear-guard was passing the last houses of Steerup, the bells struck up the joy-peal again, while the people raised an insulting shout of:

"Run, Danes, or Prussians will catch you! Schleswig-Holstein gläube!" And, at that taunt, a dozen soldiers faced-about, and ordered arms, as if to fire; but an officer hurried back; the muskets were shouldered again, and the faint sound of the Danish drum soon died away in the distance.

"Let us go home," said Captain Bluenose, with an extra hoarseness in his deep strong voice; and home we went. The home whither I, an English lad of seventeen, and my surly guide, were wending our way under the load of rods, and leaping-poles, and creels well filled with pike and perch, was Fladswäst, a village lying north of Steerup, and nearer to the fens and the coast. If Steerup was chiefly German (though there were Danish families too, sitting, with sad hearts, in back rooms, and trying to shut out the clamour of the enemies of their country), Fladswäst was as Scandinavian as Harold Harfager. Quite nine houses out of ten were inhabited by people of the pure Danish stock; many of them natives of the isles, or North Jutland. But the most thorough Dane, in heart and soul, that dwelt in Fladswäst, was certainly my guide, philosopher, and friend, in all matters of boating, fishing, and fowling, Captain Bluenose.

This old man's real name was Peter Voss. He was a Laaland man. He had served, I think, as a "powder monkey," but at any rate as a boy, on board one of the Danish frigates in the Copenhagen sea-fight of 1807. An unlucky shot from some English ship had fired the Dane's magazine, doing dreadful mischief, and blowing poor little Peter, as he phrased it, "like a feather" up the hatchway. The child was not maimed nor blinded; but a quantity of the loose gunpowder was blown into his face, and disfigured him for life, producing the effect of a ghastly and indelible tattooing. Hence, Peter Voss received the nickname of Bluenose, which stuck to him to the last. He had been man-of-war's-man, smuggler, boatswain of an Indiaman, a Singapore pilot, mate of an opium clipper, and what not. At last he had come back, well to do, from the far East; had married the heiress of a small Schleswig farmer, and succeeded in right of his wife to the farm. But he had never quite divorced himself from the blue water on which his best years had been spent. He was still master and owner of a tidy sloop, lying at Kappel, and made many a profitable cruise, selling grain and bullocks among the islands, and bringing back eider-down, salt fish, wool, and Norway spars. Hence he was always called Schipper Blauness, a name which I Anglicised into Captain Bluenose, much to its owner's satisfaction.

For the tough old seaman bore no grudge to the Britons for his own share of the defeat which "Nelson and the North" inflicted on Prince Frederick's fleet. If we English had not seized the ships, he was wont to say, the French would, and he was rather proud, than otherwise, of the manly resistance which had been offered to so mighty a neighbour. And he had served on board an English man-of-war, where he had learned to speak our tongue very intelligibly, and had a curious sort of liking for whatever bore the English name. Hence, no doubt, his fancy for me, a pupil, as I was then, of Mr. Blenck, the pastor of Fladswäst, a great classical scholar and accomplished linguist, as are many persons in North Europe, whose humble life is passed within the whitewashed walls of a Lutheran manse. Mr. Blenck's stipend was small, since though his glebe was large, he did not farm it as skilfully as some of the Danish clergy, than whom, in their old-fashioned way, there are no better farmers, and he added to it by taking pupils. Three months before, there had been three English youths under the pastor's roof. But the others had been recalled, as soon as the revolutionary disturbances broke out throughout Western Europe, their parents fearing they might come to harm among the wars and riots that prevailed. I, then, was the only pupil left, and as I had a good deal of leisure, was glad to make an ally of Captain Bluenose, the best fowler and fisher in that village of fowlers and fishers, and to enjoy the sports of the country under his guidance. The skipper was well off; he could indulge himself with a holiday twice a week, without much detriment to his affairs, and it was wonderful what havoc among birds and fish his lines and nets, his guns and decoys, contrived to make.

At Voss's farm I was always a welcome guest. His wife was dead, but he was not alone in the world, for besides Han Voss, his son, he had a daughter, Lilien. Han was about my own age, a handsome, dreamy-eyed boy, with a sweet temper and a slow intellect, a direct contrast to his fierce old father; who was fiery by nature, though he had a peculiar power of concealing his emotions beneath an exterior as rigid as that of a mask. Lilien was a lovely little creature of nine or ten, with hair like rippled gold, the brightest face, the bluest eyes, and the light step of a fairy. Indeed, one might have taken the girl for a fairy, her cleverness and grace being something surprising at her years; while there was a delicacy about her appearance that almost tallied with the description of the Jutland elves. Both of old Peter's children loved him dearly, and a kind father he was to them, much as Han's lack of the old Norse shrewdness sometimes tried his temper; but Lilien was his idol. He would spend hours in carving dolls for her with his clasp knife and a bit of alder wood, and in dressing these dolls with scraps of bright-coloured rag, after the fashion of the strange nations he had seen in far-off climes. He was never weary of telling her endless stories of China, and the Malay Archipelago, and the Spanish Main, to which Lilien, on her part, would listen with breathless attention. I won the little lady's favour by relating to her some of the wonders of English civilisation, and by describing to her the railways, the steamers, the crowded shipping in the Thames, the roar, and rush, and surge of human life to be witnessed in London. To all these

things Lille Lilien—or Little Lily, as I generally called her—would listen with her grave blue eyes fixed almost wistfully upon my face, ever and anon looking inquiringly round at her father as if to ask—"Can this be true?" And when the old man nodded assent, the child would nestle close to me, and look steadily up in my face as she drank in every word. I could talk to her in English, but poor Han never picked up more than a few sentences of our language, then, as now, very common in Denmark.

A great change had come over my simple friends since the insurrection in the duchies, and the entry of the German troops. Most of the Fladswäst people, being Danes, were true to King Frederick; but their loyalty did not prompt them to any act likely to occasion the burning of their homesteads or the pillage of their barns. They drank the king's health, and wished all manner of ill to the invaders, but it was known that Captain Bluenose had vainly used his influence to raise a band of partisan soldiery to harass the German outposts. The other farmers hung back from any rash demonstration of patriotism, pointing out, not without much show of reason, how hopeless would be a guerilla struggle in such a country.

Thus it came about, as the German triumph over the Danes grew daily more assured, the old mariner became more and more silent and morose, and spent hours in gloomy and bitter thoughtfulness. Han, who admired his father, and accepted every opinion of his without question or comment, once timidly offered to enlist as a volunteer in the Danish army, and got a grim smile of approval for his pains. But old Peter would not agree to the proposal.

"Thou art so calf-headed, lad, that thou wouldst get thy simple brains knocked out in the first skirmish," said Peter, with rough kindliness; "Sveyn Dumfka, that the Swedes made a ballad about, was not slower-witted than my Han, though I know my son's heart is in the right place. I'll not part with thee."

But Han, too, fell to thinking to an unaccustomed extent, and I have seen his eye kindle, and his cheek flush, many a time when I was sitting in the great kitchen, or the Sunday parlour at the farm, chatting with the skipper, or coaxing Lily to sing some old Danish song of Trolls, and Mermaidens, and gallant sea-rovers, in the quaint language that came near to the Icelandic itself. Even Lilien was more solemn than before, and often asked me if I did not "think the Trolls would come to the help of Denmark." But when I laughed at the notion of such fairy auxiliaries, Lille Lilien's look changed to one of offended dignity, and she rebuked me for ridiculing the Trolls. However, neither champion nor fairy appeared able or willing to do much for royal rule in Schleswig, since German soldiers and volunteers overran the country unmolested, and the entire German population made common cause with the invader. Still the Danish force in the island of Alsen, secured by the sea (Denmark's best friend), and backed by several armed vessels, held out firmly, and the marshy country between Flensburg and the Baltic was still patrolled by Danish horse. A camp had been formed at a place called Flaxbye, on a swampy tongue of land nearly opposite to the island, and in this camp were quartered the Danish cavalry and one or two battalions of foot, guarding a quantity of stores and material of war, which it had not been found convenient to remove by sea. This camp, small as it was, was still an eyesore to the Germans, and it would probably have been instantly assailed, had it not been very difficult of access. The main road to Flaxbye was indeed circuitous, and in more than one place was commanded by earthworks still in Danish keeping, while pontoons would be needed for the passage of streams and creeks, the bridges over which had been blown up. So Flaxbye was left undisturbed for a little time.

M. Blenck, my worthy tutor, who would, I believe, have taught Greek without tripping over a tense or a particle, while Nero was burning Rome about his ears, expressed his mild concern that I should have grown so inattentive and unpunctual in my studies. But for the life of me I could not help it. Boy as I was, the deep thrill that pervaded the popular heart reached mine and made it quiver with sympathy for the shame, the sorrow, the desperate hopes, of those about me. Every day brought some fresh rumour: now that a Swedish army was landing; now that England was coming to the rescue; now that all Danes were to be driven from house and home, and banished. But nothing of much moment occurred, until the roll of the Prussian drums was heard in Fladswäst one fine afternoon, and I dropped my Herodotus and Lexicon, and, snatching my hat, ran out of the manse, deaf to my tutor's upbraidings.

In the little market-place, under the cool lime-trees, almost all the population of the village had collected, while the troops had been halted on the paved space in the middle of the square. I instantly guessed that some mischief was meant. Had it been designed merely to disarm the people and dismiss the Amtmann, as had been done elsewhere, a tithe of the force present would have sufficed. But as it was, my eye ranged hastily over a battalion of Prussian infantry, a company of Jagers, and some hundreds of riflemen belonging to the half-disciplined Free Corps, escorted by some cavalry and four guns. Of the cavalry about forty, or half a troop, were lancers, and I counted seventy-nine hussars. The advance of this imposing force augured ill for the security of the few Danes left on the mainland, and this thought struck others, for I heard the word,

"Flaxbye! Flaxbye!" muttered all around me.

Brigadier Hahn, who commanded the column, came forward at the head of the little knot of officers that formed his staff, and ordered silence, reining in his horse and holding up his sword to indicate that a speech was to be expected. There was a dead hush; all were so

eager to know the worst. The brigadier, a stiff martinet, but accounted a valuable and active officer, glanced frowningly to left and right. He saw anxious faces, but no smile of welcome, not a rosette of the Schleswig colours, not a scrap of tricolored ribbon. The Danes had too much manliness to curry favour with the foe by wearing these hated emblems, and the few Germans in the Fladswäst were too prudent or too kind to outrage the feelings of their neighbours.

Brigadier Hahn rated us all collectively in the purest court German, which every man and woman there, of whichever race, understood sufficiently well, save myself. I could only pick up broken scraps of the discourse, but I gathered that the Fladswästers were abused as a pack of disloyal churls, unfit for liberty, that they were threatened with all sorts of penalties for giving countenance to the cause of Denmark, and that the Prussian ended by demanding guides to show the nearest way to Flaxbye. There was a murmur, for suspicion had been exchanged for certainty. Flaxbye was to be attacked, and by surprise, if the enemy could manage it. It was well known that a road existed between our village and the Danish camp, but so miry and wet, so intricate, that few but the Fladswäst fenners, when out after wild-fowl, could have pointed out the true course. And this fact the Prussian commander evidently knew well.

"I must have two guides. Do you hear? Tausand Teiflern! must I have you pricked by bayonets to sharpen your wits!" called out the brigadier, harshly. The Free Corps began to get noisy as they heard the general's voice in anger; hard words were bandied from side to side, and I dare say the village might have been sacked, or even burned, on light provocation. But the officers were firm, and in a few moments all was quiet again. When the brigadier next spoke it was in a different key.

"Come, my lads, there's no use in making wry faces. You are all subjects of Schleswig-Holstein, and had better forget the king of Copenhagen as soon as may be. We don't want to harm peaceable people; but that wasps'-nest at Flaxbye shall be smoked out, if I have to burn fifty hamlets in the doing it. Give me guides, and I promise you protection. Come, I offer a hundred rixdollars. Will no sensible fellow step forward?"

No reply.

"Two hundred. Three," repeated the Prussian, more impatiently. A man came shouldering forward through the crowd, dragging a youth by the arm.

"I'm your man, general. For three hundred rixdollars in hard money, I'll guide you to Flaxbye, by day or night; for I know every inch of the way, and my boy here knows it as well as I do."

To my astonishment—and astonishment is a mild word for the stupefaction with which I listened to these words—the man was my own dear Captain Bluenose, the staunchest Dane in the place. The lad, of course, was Han. I think the neighbours were as surprised as I was. They were silent for a minute, and then there broke out a storm of hissing and curses.

Old Peter stood up undaunted. His grim face betrayed no touch of shame, but Han hung his head, and I could see that he was sobbing as he stood beside his father under that hailstorm of disgrace. Some of the Prussian troopers were now ordered to ride into the crowd and enforce order, which they did by beating the people over the heads and shoulders with the flats of their swords, but not very severely, and the throng soon sunk into a dead, sullen silence. The brigadier gazed hard and long at the rugged face of his volunteer guide, and the scrutiny did not seem to satisfy him.

"You look a determined fellow. You have the air of one who has served, too," said the general, with a piercing glance at the tough old mariner. "Of course there are two sides to the bargain. Guide us well, and I pay you down the cash as soon as we have destroyed the camp. Mislead or betray us, and I will have you shot like a dog. Do you know that?"

The voice of old Voss was very thick and husky, like that of a drunken man, though it was plain that he was sober, as he replied unflinchingly:

"Herr General, I accept the bargain. My life, and Han's life, against three hundred silver dollars. I don't say it's a pleasant job, but I'm in debt over head and ears, and want to be off to America, and this money——"

"Enough, enough!" broke in the general, with an involuntary sneer; "the money shall be yours if you earn it. Corporal Hencke, take two file and guard these men. They must not give us the slip. The troops may stand at ease. The assembly will sound in due time."

I never saw such indignation, horror, or amazement, stamped on human faces as on those of the inhabitants of Fladswäst, when they thoroughly understood that the bargain was struck, and that the old skipper, hitherto respected by all, was to be the traitor who was to lead the Prussians to his countrymen's place of refuge. Some of the elder men still shook their heads, and seemed deaf to conviction, but the young and the females, more impulsive, could not find words to express their loathing for the veteran's treachery. The men, cowed by the presence of the troops, did not venture on loud speech, but some of the women set up a shrill cry of "Judas!" followed by an outburst of frantic execration, such as it was terrible to hear. I thought I saw old Voss wince a little, but his stern countenance betrayed no emotion, and I turned away with a sickness of heart such as I had never felt before. I made my way out of the village, and quickly, for already there was talk of posting sentries, on the part of the Germans, on every road, to prevent intelligence from being conveyed to the Danes. Indeed, although the bulk of the troops were crowding into the kro and beer-houses, or settling in impromptu bivouacs to take what refreshment the commissary could afford them, patrols began

to move about, and I was pursued, as I left the place, by a hoarse shout to bid me return. I pushed on, however, and was soon far from Fladswäst.

For some time I walked on rapidly, trying to drown thought by violent exertion. Then, when I found myself far along the way from the village to the sea, I passed through a gap into a meadow, flung myself on the soft turf beneath a gnarled evergreen oak, and gave myself up to thoughts that were anything but pleasant ones. Boy that I was, I knew little and cared less for the political bearings of the case; but my sympathies were with the Danes, among whom I had lived, and from whom I had received much homely kindness. I had been an honoured guest in their great farm-houses, where employers and servants sat together in primitive fashion around the huge stove in winter, and where the copper and tin vessels on the walls glittered like actual gold and silver in the candlelight. They had taught me to shoot and to manage a boat, had taken me out on many an expedition by land and water, and always vied with one another in good-natured hospitality to the lonely English lad, their pastor's pupil. And now——

I thought of my poor friends, disarmed, browbeaten, trodden down by the German majority, and perhaps even driven from their homes and fields to make way for the conquerors. I thought of the slaughter and disgrace of the handful of troops at Flaxbye, taken unawares as they would be, and weakened, as I had but yesterday heard they were, by the withdrawal of most of the infantry either to Alsen or the strong intrenched camp of Düppel, lying north on the mainland, and at the usual ferry between the island and the Schleswig coast. And then I thought, more in sorrow than resentment, how shamefully I had been deceived in Captain Bluenose, my best friend among all those hardy fenmen, and one whom I had esteemed as a brave, honest-hearted old patriot. To be sure, he was in debt, so he said, and debt often drives men to shameful acts; but then how *could* old Bluenose be in debt. It was a puzzle to me, as I remembered his farm, freehold land, small but well stocked, his sloop, and his thrifty habits. I had got thus far in my perturbed thoughts, when something bright-coloured, like a tropic bird, went flashing past between the green hedges of the lane. I raised myself on my elbow and looked after it. It was but a moment and the trees shut it out from view, but my eye caught a glimpse of a child wearing a little scarlet cloak with a hood, such as "Lille Lilien" wore, and on account of which I often named her in jest "Little Red Riding Hood," and bade her take care lest wolves should eat her. The hood had fallen back, and a tress of the little maiden's hair hung loose and gleamed in the setting sun for an instant, then all vanished like a dream. I called her name, but there was no reply, and I supposed myself mistaken. The sun sank lower and lower, but the air was still warm, and I was in no hurry to go back to Fladswäst. It was not that I stood in awe of M. Blenck's reproaches; my good tutor's anger at my truancy was sure to be gently expressed. But I could not endure to hear the bustle and din made by the Germans in the village, and I was averse to witnessing the humiliation of my friends. Poor Captain Bluenose! I could never again sit at his fireside or go out with him in his boat, listening gladly to his stories of far-away scenes and adventures.

Before I had gone half a mile towards home, I heard the steady tramp of troops, and the head of the column appeared. First rode two videttes, with carbines unslung. On catching sight of me, they came up at a trot, and called to me to halt. I looked about me for the means of escape, but the hedges were high and thick, and I had no choice but to obey. One of the hussars clutched me by the collar, and compelled me to walk beside his horse till I was led into the presence of Brigadier Hahn, who bluntly accused me of being a spy, and ordered me to be searched. Nothing of a compromising nature, of course, was found in my pockets; but I think the general was sorry for the circumstance. He gruffly said that "Englanders were a conceited set, and must not think to have their own way when dealing with Royal Prussian officers." Instead of suffering me to go home, he gave orders that I should be placed beside the guides, and accompany the column.

For some time, I really did not venture to look at my companions. There were tears in my own eyes, and I could not bear to look Voss in the face. Presently I stole a look at Han. To my surprise, he was no longer the shame-stricken lad who had stood beside his father that day, cowering under the popular scorn. No. His head was erect; his eye bright and bold. He looked like a young hero, marching out to battle in a good cause and with a good conscience. There was a newly-awakened intelligence in his face that seemed to transform it. Bluenose—who had betrayed his own people for German bribes—it was wonderful to see how calm he was as he walked, under a strong guard, in front of the column. Both he and his son were fastened by cords to the saddle-bows of Prussian troopers, and were vigilantly watched, but allowed to talk to each other in a low voice. The skipper gave me a nod as I was placed near him, and I suppose, even in the dusk, he saw the working of my face, since he said, quietly:

"I thought it was not the English fashion to be hasty in judging an old friend. I know what you think, boy; but, wait—wait."

Presently Han asked if I had "seen Lilien?"

"Then it was Lilien," said I, eagerly, "who ran past in her red cloak; but why——"

"Silence, all. Silence!" said an officer, who rode near; and nothing more was said. The march was conducted cautiously, without beat of drum, and the soldiers were very quiet, though the Free Corps often broke into snatches of the National Hymn, and it cost the chiefs much trouble to hush them. First rode the hussars, then came the Prussians, and thirdly

the Free Corps; then the Jagers, with cannon and lancers in the rear. It was soon dark, but though the network of lanes was most intricate, the guides knew the country so well that they never hesitated. But the roads were of the worst, and, in spite of the dry weather, the tenacious mire and deep ruts made it cruel work to drag the guns. The progress of the force was therefore slow.

The pale new moon and stars threw a cold light down upon us as we toiled on. Presently I felt the sea-breeze on my cheek, and knew that Flaxbye must be near. We were in a wild country, full of meres and brooks, with high dykes and stone walls on each side the narrow road. But the Germans were confident of an easy victory, and I heard the officers mutter congratulations to each other as we pressed on. For my own part, I was puzzled. The calm of Voss's bearing, the pride of the son's manner, which would have become a victor rather than a traitor, perplexed me. Then, if Lilien had passed me as I lay, whither was she bound, and wherefore? To these mental queries a tremendous answer was about to be returned.

The column was labouring through miry ground, where the feet sank into deep mud at every step. Suddenly a bugle sounded, and at the first note old Captain Bluenose sprang like a tiger on the dragoon at his side, wrested his sabre from him, and, cutting the cords that bound himself and Han to their captors, waved his hat high in air with his left hand, shouting, "Hurrah for old Denmark and the King!"

In an instant the long wall was bristling with levelled muskets and the heads of soldiers in the well known Danish uniform, while with a cheer of "God save Denmark!" they poured a heavy volley into the closely-packed ranks of the Prussians. Thus much I saw. I heard, too, the galloping of horse in our front, the cheers and shouts of infantry and cavalry rushing forward, the word of command among the Prussians, the yells, cries, clamour, and groans, mingled with the incessant ring of musketry. It was plain that the German troops were caught in a trap, and, from what I heard, I gathered that the raw levies of the Free Corps had given way, and that the surprise was successful and complete. Around the spot where I stood the confusion was fearful, and, as I was swept forward and driven against the bank by a rush of plunging horses, I saw a dozen sabres and pistols raised in vengeance, while I heard an angry shout to kill the guides. For one of these I was probably mistaken: a trooper spurred upon me, and dealt me a furious stroke with his sabre. The flat of the blade alone, by good luck, fell on my head; but I was beaten down on the bank, and the hussar, with a savage curse, swung back his arm for a surer blow. Then I remember Lilien's angel face and golden hair coming between me and the soldier, and her outstretched arm as she lifted it over me in mute entreaty. Perhaps the trooper had a recollection of child-sisters of his own at home in Germany; for he hesitated to strike, and as he did so, a stray shot brought his horse to the ground. He was taken prisoner by the Danish troops, who were now in full pursuit of the retreating enemy.

Poor Captain Bluenose was not alive to share the triumph of his countrymen. He had been shot dead by one of the hussars, and lay, calm and stern as in life, while Han lay beside him, wounded, but living; and Lilian threw herself on her dear father's body with a piteous cry that I shall never forget. Han recovered from his wounds, and, when he came out of hospital, sold house and land, and took his little sister away with him to Laaland, I believe, where the old man had relations. I never saw the bright little face again; but it was well known in Denmark and Schleswig that my old friend had feigned to lead the enemy against his countrymen merely to serve the cause he loved better than life itself. He had formed the resolution in haste, and as a child would not be suspected of carrying intelligence, he had found means secretly to despatch Lilian by a shorter route with a few written words to the Danish general at Flaxbye, and hence the ambuscade and its successful results.

No man's memory is more honoured among the honest Danes of Fladswäst than that of poor old Voss, or as they love best to call him, Captain Bluenose. Nor have I ever seen the Captain's grave, in my subsequent visits to the place, in a neglected condition, or without a wreath of the freshest flowers, all the summer through. Fladswäst fell for a time into Danish hands, though the Germans soon regained it. Before that day came my parents, alarmed for my safety, recalled me to England, and it was not till long after that I revisited Denmark.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XI. ENDS AN IDYLL.

THE Marouillais began to talk scandal about J. B. Constant and his too precocious stable-girl and chambermaid, for she now officiated in both capacities, still preserving her ascendancy as mistress of the horse, but having a lad to assist her. The mayor warned the innkeeper against the "whispering tongues that poison truth." M. le Curé insisted that, for morality's sake, the girl should be sent away.

"She is fit for something better than a fille d'auberge," he represented.

"Granted, monsieur," returned Constant. "But how is her condition to be bettered?"

"The good sisters at Avignon," hinted the ecclesiastic.

Constant shook his head.

"The good sisters," he remarked, "would, I much fear, be powerless in turning Valérie into a Sister of Charity or a village schoolmistress, and what more could they do with her? It is a pity that she was not sent to them two years ago. Then they might have had the credit of her sudden conversion. For the rest, it is no affair of mine. An innkeeper may have a servant-maid. She is a capital servant, and her aunt is there to watch over her."

It was the curate's turn to shake his head. "Mon ami," he said, "that poor ignorant old woman is a mere baby in the hands of that girl. She can no longer be chastised. The time for the cord and the thong is past."

"I should like to see any one attempting to lay a hand on Valérie," exclaimed the innkeeper, with a sudden start, and clenching his fists. "Ma parole d'honneur! I would exterminate him."

"There is no fear of such an eventuality,"-the curé returned; "nor," he continued, in gentle reproof, "is there any need for a fallible human creature to speak of 'extermination'—a terrible power, vested only in Omnipotence."

"I ask your pardon, M. le Curé."

"'Tis granted, my friend. But, nevertheless, get rid of that young creature; if you don't, malicious tongues will continue to wag, and evil will follow."

Constant was privately of the priest's opinion, but certain reasons, at which the intelligent reader may have already hazarded a surmise, rendered him reluctant to follow the friendly advice of his pastor. He passed several days in perplexity, anxiously revolving plans in his mind for modifying the condition of his too handsome servant, when Valérie brought the matter to a solution by a voluntary suggestion that she should be sent to school for a couple of years.

"I am tired of tending horses," she said. "My hands are not yet quite spoiled; but six months more of stable-work will make them as hard as buffalo-skin. I am tired of being ignorant. It is as much as I can do to read the big painted letters under the four lilies on the sign-board. I can't write at all. I want to be able to read the Gazette de France, and to play the piano, and paint pictures, and write letters, and be a lady."

"Vastly well, mademoiselle," replied Constant, with subdued irony. "But who, pray, is to pay for your education?"

"That is your affair, not mine. If you choose to send me to school it will be better for you. If you won't, I will get a livret from M. le Maire, and seek a servant's place at Avignon. My aunt will give me permission, and you must give me a character."

The argument was unanswerable. Jean Baptiste had prospered at the Lilies of France, and could well afford the outlay. For the sum of a thousand francs, a lady keeping a boarding-school at Lyons consented to receive Mademoiselle Valérie Sablon—for that was the real name of her aunt—for twelve months, and to instruct her in all the accomplishments. The girl had refused point-blank to enter a conventual school, and had selected Lyons in preference to Avignon, because, she said, she did not wish to meet any of those people of Marouillais by chance in their visits to the town. J. B. Constant agreed that in this particular she was in the right; nor, when she left Marouille-le-Gency, did he make public the fact that she was about to proceed to school to receive a polite education. He merely said that a married sister of his, who kept an hotel at Lyons, had agreed to receive Valérie, and to look after her morals, and make her useful. La Beugleuse did not care to contradict this statement. Perhaps she was never enlightened as to the

real state of the case. In truth, she had not fairly recovered from the state of bewilderment into which the sudden metamorphosis of the little grubby good-for-nothing she had adopted, had thrown her. So, when Valérie went away, La Beugleuse looked upon her withdrawal very much in the light of a relief from an embarrassing position.

But why this concealment on the part of Jean Baptiste? Why should the upright J. B. Constant think Lyons preferable to Avignon? Why should he have given an untruthful account of the girl's change of life? The always intelligent reader will have little difficulty in answering these questions.

Yes, the bushy-headed down-looking innkeeper was savagely in love with Valérie. I say savagely, because there was something morose and ferocious in the passion that devoured him. He could not bear the girl to be out of his sight. He chafed at the necessity of parting with her, even for a time, and for her benefit. He went into silent rages at her caprice, her arrogance, her cool assumption of superiority over him—all ignorant as she was, and next door to a castaway. He loathed and longed to rend in pieces all whom she talked or laughed with. He was madly jealous of her, mere child as she was.

He had no bad designs towards Valérie. At this time he was an honest man, and there was not much harm about J. B. Constant. He had never loved till now. His only hope was, that the girl would be grateful to him. His wish was, that she should grow up a beautiful and accomplished woman, and become his wife.

"I will leave this wretched little hole of a village," he said to himself in his day-dreams; "I have made some money and can borrow more. I will take a grand hotel in Paris—in the English quarter in the Faubourg St. Honoré. Valérie will be my wife. She will sit in the bureau, in a black satin robe, and with a gold chain round her neck, and keep the accounts. The waiters will bow and call her Madame la Patronne. She will go to mass at St. Roch or the Madeleine. On Sundays, we will dine here and there, go to St. Cloud, and to the Opera, and the theatres. Jean Baptiste, my boy, you shall be envied; you shall be happy." So he thought, and so he dreamed. Poor fellow!

"If she should be ungrateful!" a voice sometimes whispered to him. The fear of her ingratitude was a black phantom not to be conjured away. "She cannot, she will not," he would mutter. "If she refuses to love me, I will kill her."

When Valérie had been six months at school, J. B. Constant undertook a journey to Lyons to see her. He found her more beautiful than before. The schoolmistress said that her progress was wonderful; that she had already distanced many girls who had been in the establishment—and with the advantages of previous education—three and four years; and that, if she were allowed to remain with her, two years instead of one, she would answer for her leaving, fitted to move in the very highest circles. She did not know that J. B. Constant was a mere village innkeeper. He had seen the world, and served noblemen, and at Lyons he put on his best clothes and his best manners.

There was one drop of bitterness in the hurried account the governess gave of her pupil. Mademoiselle, she said, was a young person difficult to manage. She would not endure reproof. She would not hear reason. Her temper was terrible. "We will make the pension twelve hundred francs a year instead of a thousand, and you must make allowances for Mademoiselle's temper," said Constant. "Poor child, she never knew her mother, and in early years was unkindly treated!" The schoolmistress was a sagacious as well as a sympathising instructress, and for the extra stipend agreed to say nothing more about Valérie's indisposition to hear reason.

When J. B. Constant had an interview with his protégée, the governess being present, she received him with a stately curtsey, and eyes demurely cast down; but when Madame du Verger discreetly left them together, she accosted the innkeeper with a haughty familiarity that was half redolent of the old rough manners of the stable-girl, and half satirical.

"Ah, ça, mon homme!" she cried. "What do you think of me now? Am I grown? Are my hands coarse? Is my voice harsh?"

As he was going away, full of love and hope, though slightly discomfited by this reception:

"And La Beugleuse, the old hag who used to flog me—is she dead?"

"Your aunt is alive, Valérie," Constant said, with a reproachful look.

"I am sorry for it. Such old witches ought to die. I hate her, and will pay her out for all the blows she has given me. Besides, when I go into the world she will disgrace me. To have an aunt who has worked in the fields! To have an aunt who was a mere beast of burden! Quoi! Mon homme, you must take care that she never leaves Marouille." And so, with the stately curtsey, in strange disunion with her hard and bitter talk, the girl left him.

She never wrote to her aunt. The old woman was by no means despondent under this neglect. She merely muttered that Valérie would be a good-for-nothing, even if she were married to M. le Préfet, and then went on working harder than ever. To Jean Baptiste the exemplary pensionnaire at Madame du Verger's wrote with tolerable regularity once a month. Her letters always began "Mon bon ami," as if this young pauper had been an empress, and Constant president of a republic. Madame du Verger had suggested "Mon cher bienfaiteur," but Valérie had refused point-blank to adopt the formula. She wrote in a bold flowing hand, her letters contained a dry summary of her educational progress—of the books she had read, and the accomplishments she had mastered—and ended, "Valérie Sablon"

tout court. Madame du Verger had hinted that "votre toujours reconnaissante Valérie," would be a slightly graceful acknowledgment of the kindness of the person who was paying for her education, but Mademoiselle Sablon very scornfully replied, "I shall do what I like, and I am not his Valérie."

She left Lyons when she was on the verge of eighteen. This was in 1828. Constant was fearful of her coming back to Marouille yet awhile. He wished her to return only once, as his wife, to astound those who had known her in her poverty and her degradation, and then quit the place for ever. His plan was, that she should enter a school in Paris or in England for another year or fifteen months—not as a pupil, but as a boarder—and that she should then make him happy. He unfolded this scheme to her, in the parlour of the school, on the day when he went to fetch her away. He avowed his love, and said, with a smile, that it was pure and honourable.

The girl laughed at him. "What a fairy tale!" she cried. "'Beauty and the Beast over again! Yes, monsieur, I am Beauty, and you are the Beast, with your sleepy eyes, and your great black head like a primeval forest. Ah! you thought a pretty grape-vine was growing up for you. Ah! you thought you had but to shake the tree, and the pear would fall into your mouth!"

"Valérie," the innkeeper humbly expostulated, "I implore you not to speak in that mocking spirit. Think of my devotion, of my love."

"I know nothing about it," sneered Valérie. "What should I, a school-girl of eighteen, know about devotion! Love was not taught in this school. It was forbidden."

Again, and with the eloquence which sincerity alone can give, and gives, too, to the most tongue-tied man, he pressed his suit.

"Don't be absurd," was Valérie's reply. "You will bore me. I know nothing of life yet. I have only seen one stupid provincial town. I am tired of schools, whether as pupil or boarder. I have had enough of books, and want to see the world. I must be free and independent. I don't want to tie myself for life to a stupid old man with a head like a grisly bear. Do you wish to ruin my career?"

"Your career," repeated Constant, in sorrowful surprise. "Valérie, what would your career have been but for me? Ah! do not be ungrateful."

"Do not exaggerate your claims to my gratitude. It appears you had your own purpose to serve, in educating me. You merely picked up what had been abandoned. The next passer-by might have done the same, and not have been a village publican. Men are not so blind as you take them to be. Somebody would have been sure to have discovered the pearl on the dunghill, sooner or later."

So she reasoned with the pitiless logic of an ungrateful heart. There was no moving or softening her. In a moment of justifiable irritation Constant threatened to withdraw his protection. She coolly answered, as before, that her character was unimpeached; that the mayor of her native place was bound by law to give her a passport and a livret; and that she would have no difficulty in obtaining employment as a servant in town or country. Constant knew that in this matter she had right on her side, and that he could gain nothing by breaking with her. He thought that to lose her would be death or madness to him. He suggested a négotiation, a compromise. Valérie was willing to negotiate—in the spirit and on the same bases recently proposed by his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, when the great Powers remonstrated with him on his flagrant violations of the treaties of 1815, and his atrocious treatment of the Poles. The autocrat, if I remember right (for I am no politician), expressed his benevolent willingness to "show clemency" to the Poles, "after the insurrectionary bands had been dispersed." So Valérie argued. "Grovel in the dust at my feet," she implied. "Abandon all your pretensions, and then I may extend some 'clemency' to you." The negotiation was concluded in this wise: When J. B. Constant had told the Marouillais that Valérie was to be placed under the protection of a married sister who kept an hotel in Lyons, he had told a lie—but a white one. There were extenuating circumstances in his fraud. He really had a sister, and a married sister, who kept an hotel—but she lived in Paris, and not in Lyons. She should go to Paris, and live a year with this sister, Madame Hummelhausen, wife of a German, formerly of the profession of bootmaking, but now principally of certain sixth-rate estaminets on the Boulevards, where he smoked, drank beer, and played endless parties of dominoes, while his wife worked hard at home. She would go to Madame Hummelhausen, but a wardrobe suitable to the position of a young lady brought up in affluence was to be provided for her, and she was to be completely her own mistress. A strange treaty, of a verity! Where one of the contracting parties had all, and the other nothing, and where the pauper dictated terms to the capitalist! And yet such treaties are registered by the bundle in Love's chancery. Constant signed all the protocols, as, in this issue he would have signed away his last crust, his liberty, his life. There was no need for Valérie to return yet awhile to Marouille. She was not so very anxious to see her aunt again. There are handsome and well-stocked shops in Lyons, and the expenditure of some fifteen hundred francs soon furnished Mademoiselle Valérie Sablon with the articles of wearing apparel she required for the moment. "When I want more dresses," she said to her slave, calmly, "I will write, and you will open a credit for me with Madame what do you call her—Hummelhausen—quel nom de Visigoth! As for jewellery, there will be time enough to think

about that, afterwards. That gold cross you were ridiculous enough to buy me yesterday, I shall not wear. It is absurd. Je ne suis pas vouée à la Vierge, moi!"

The innkeeper uttered a low moan of rage, disappointment, wounded love.

"I thought you would have admired it, Valérie."

"And I don't. Take me to the Palais Royal, and I will talk to you about ornaments. How I long to see that Palais Royal! These Lyons goldsmiths are barbarians."

He had taken a place for her in the coupé of the diligence to Paris, and was bidding her farewell. He looked at her with gloomy, greedy eyes.

"*Ah! bah!*" she cried; "one would think you were the wolf, and I Little Red Riding Hood. Is it for my pot of butter that you make those great eyes, monsieur! What large eyes you have, grandmamma!"

Constant abandoned further conflict. "I am ready to accompany you to the coach-office," he said, with dolorous meekness.

"There is a good little wolf. You'll make Little Red Riding Hood quite fond of you if you go on in that way.

> Je pourrais m'amouracher,
> Je pourrais m'amouracher,
> Je pourrais m'amouracher,
> D'un riche, riche, riche, très riche richard.

Do you know the chanson? The master didn't teach it me. The girls used to sing it in the dormitory under the bed-clothes. Ah! we learn a great deal at school."

"I am ready, Valérie."

"And I too. It is agreed upon, n'est-ce pas, that you leave me in peace for six months?"

"For six months I will not trouble you. I will not even write to you if you are averse to receiving communications from me. What I have to say shall be said through my sister."

"No; that looks like surveillance. Write to me: it will amuse me."

A gleam of passionate satisfaction shot across Constant's face.

"I will write," he said, his heart palpitating.

"But no long letters. No love, or nonsense of that kind. Don't bore me. Now I am ready. Nay, perhaps you would like to kiss my hand."

She held out her hand to him as she spoke. She had never granted him that slight favour before. It was not a small hand. She was a grandiose woman; but it was very white, and soft, and plump. Who to look upon it could have thought that it had drawn country wine for bumpkins and stable-boys, or wielded a pitch-fork to toss stable-litter about?

He accompanied her to the coach-office, put her in her seat, wrapped her up in warm shawls and rugs, placed a basket full of dainties and wine by her side, and would have pressed if not kissed her hand once more, even in the open coach-yard, but that she said sharply:

"Enough of that! You nearly bit my hand just now, besides all but wrenching it from the wrist. You are too affectionate, mon homme. Good-by, and go back as fast as ever you can to that stupid old Marouille-le-Gency. Adieu! Love for you, life for me!" And the diligence clattered and rumbled away Parisward, and Jean Baptiste Constant was left desolate.

He could not make up his mind to return to the village. He wandered about Lyons for two whole days. He called again on Madame du Verger, asking her futile questions. The schoolmistress knew well enough what ailed him. He had been a good customer, and she sympathised with him. The girl had left some inconsiderable fal-lals behind her—a gauze scarf, a pair or two of gloves, a piece of music. These were given to him, and he treasured them with burning avidity. Then he went to the theatre, and tried to listen to an opera; but the mocking voice of Valérie rose high above the braying and tinkling of trumpet and cymbal, and the flourishes of the singers. He went from café to café, and drank deep—which was not his custom; but Valérie's scornful accents were audible, to him, above the clattering of the dominoes, the jangling of the coffee-cups, the cries of "Trois, six!" "A qui la pose!" and the shrill "V'là monsieur!" of the waiters. Valérie's face was in the cup, and Valérie's form wreathed itself out from the thready vapour of the cigars. At last he went back to Marouille, to see after the wants of the billiard players, and to scold the postilions and stable-boys. But, two days after his return, he went to Avignon, and instructed the same notary of whom he had purchased the good will of the Lilies of France, to advertise the Lilies again for immediate disposal.

It was a month before any reasonable offer was made. At last a customer was found, in the person of an Avignon linendraper, who thought that country air would do him good. After much haggling, he agreed to give forty thousand francs for the premises and good will—a considerable advance on the sum Constant had paid for them; but, by his energy and perseverance, he had much improved the property. He had written to his sister to inform her of his approaching departure, but begged her to keep it, for a while, a secret from Valérie. He wished to be in Paris without the girl's knowledge. His successor in the post-office promised, in case any letters arrived for him with the Paris postmark, to re-direct them to him. Then he took his place in the diligence, and, in two days' time, found himself in the French capital.

When he arrived in Paris he wrote to his sister, telling her to meet him at an obscure furnished lodgings in the Marais. The Hummelhausens lived in the Rue St. Lazare, in one of the noisiest, liveliest quarters of the brawling capital. Madame Hummelhausen came, and brought her budget of news with her. Valérie was more beautiful than ever. She had engaged a music-master. She sang divinely. She was

passionately fond of the Opera and the theatres; but her temper was insupportable. "And I for one will not put up with it," quoth Madame Hummelhausen. Jean Baptiste, my brother, you are a simple. Turn this girl out of doors if she won't have you, and make the happiness of some honest woman whose temper does not turn the world topsy-turvy, and who knows how to love and obey a good kind man."

J. B. Constant was far too much in love to see the force of this argument. He implored his sister to wait until the expiration of the stipulated twelve months—or at least of six, when he would see Valérie, and come to some definite understanding with her. Meanwhile, faithful to his promise of leaving Valérie in peace, he waited patiently for the post from Avignon to bring him that long-expected re-directed letter with the Paris postmark. But it never came. At his instigation, Madame Hummelhausen gently hinted to Valérie that it might be as well to write a line to her brother.

"A quoi bon?" retorted the girl. "That my letter should travel five hundred leagues backwards and forwards to no purpose? Do you think I am an idiot? The great dolt is here. Yes; Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant has been prowling about Paris these two months, engaged in the highly dignified occupation of playing the spy over a young girl. Since when have you kept spies in your family, madame? Does Monsieur Constant belong to the police? I have caught sight of him hundreds of times, on the Boulevards, in the Luxembourg and Tuileries gardens, at the theatres, at church even. What does he mean by this insolence, in dogging my footsteps? Why does he not come here, like an honest man, and tell me what he wants?"

"He promised to leave you in peace for six months," pleaded Madame Hummelhausen.

"Let him come now. I wish to see him. I have something to say to him."

He went to her, his heart bounding with the hope that she had relented; that she would say to him, "Constant, I have teased you long enough. I am changed. I am grateful. I am yours." But, the nether millstone still held its place in her breast. She received him with the old mockery, the old disdain. Her inflexibility had gotten a Parisian gloss upon it, and would have been horrible, had she not looked more beautiful than ever.

"I am sick of being a pensioner," she said; "of being told that I ought to be grateful for this and for that. I want to be free, and to earn my own livelihood."

She had the hardihood to tell Jean Baptiste that she wished to go on the stage. "I have a mission for the dramatic career," she said, with lofty conceit. "And you should enter me as a student of the Conservatory, as a singer, or a dancer, or an actress; but that I abhor discipline, and before a week was over should undoubtedly box the ears of one of the professors. Imagine boxing the ears of Monsieur Cherubini! No; I must go where I can give orders, instead of receiving them."

She unfolded her plans. She had made acquaintance, through the Hummelhausens, with one Duruflée, who had a kind of private theatre for dramatic aspirants at the Batignolles. She would pay him a premium—the funds, of course, to be furnished by M. Constant—and would practise among his pupils for a few months. Then Duruflée would get her, for a commission, an engagement at one of the petty Boulevard theatres. Thence to the Gaîté, thence to the Porte St. Martin, thence to the Théâtre-Français.

J. B. Constant understood, and shuddered, but he did not demur.

"And after that?" he asked.

"After that, we shall see," she replied; "after that, if you are very, very quiet, and well behaved, the ice may melt. How many years did the bon homme Jacob wait for Laban's daughter?"

'Twas the first inkling of a promise she had ever given him. It threw him into an ecstasy of joy. He agreed to all she asked. Madame Hummelhausen was glad to be rid of her troublesome charge, but said little to encourage her brother's hopes. "She has no heart, not an atom," she persisted. J. B. Constant would not listen to his sister. He would not have lent an ear, where Valérie was concerned, to Solomon, or to Nathan the Wise, or to the seven sapient men of Gotham. What could those last-named wiseacres have done beyond advising him to go to sea in a bowl? And was he not already launched upon the ocean in a skiff quite as frail?

Valérie chose to have apartments of her own, at the Batignolles, close to M. Duruflée's private theatre. This worthy had been a chorister at the Académie till he lost his voice, when he turned chef de claque, or head of a band of hired applauders at the theatre. He lost his place through venality—for there is a code of honour even among claqueurs—being detected in taking money from two rival actresses who were to make their début on the same night. The claque applauded both. The two affirmatives made a negative: neither triumphed. The rivals were furious; the direction scandalised, and Duruflée had his congé. After such a Fontainebleau (if to be kicked out can be considered an abdication) there was clearly no Elba for the banished potentate of the claque, but in the Rue de Jérusalem. He became affiliated to the police; then he served the Tribunal of Commerce as one of its bailiffs; then he went on the Bourse, and, by assiduous speculation for a fall, contrived to win some ten thousand francs of the basest money in the world. His dramatic propensities were still strong within him, and he invested his gains in the organisation of a Théâtre de Jeunes Elèves at the Batignolles. He was very fat, good natured, clever, gross, humorous, astute, and a consummate blackguard. He still kept up his connexion with the Préfecture. His insatiable thirst for absinthe made him one of those rare

monstrosities—a drunken Frenchman; but he was a better spy when intoxicated than when sober.

In the spring of 1831, Valérie, being then in her twenty-first year, made her first appearance at the Folies Dramatiques. She came out in some sanguinolent drama of the then new romantic school. She represented some great wicked lady covered with guilt and diamonds, and created a furore. The wickedness she was enabled to portray with rare fidelity from her accurate observation of human nature. It was J. B. Constant who found the diamonds. The money he had received from the sale of the inn at Marouille was all gone by this time. He was taking up money at a hundred per cent from the usurers. He had borrowed from his sister all she could afford to lend, and more; but Valérie wanted diamonds, real diamonds—she laughed paste to scorn—and she had them. If she had ordered J. B. Constant to forge the name of M. Jacques Lafitte to bills to the extent of five hundred thousand francs, with a certainty of the court of assizes, the pillory, and the galleys, in perpetuity, commencing from the very next day, he would have obeyed her.

She was soon engaged at a handsome salary, at the Porte St. Martin. Her wish was attained. She was free and independent; but she did not offer to give back to J. B. Constant the money he had spent on her education, or the diamonds he had lavished upon her. On the contrary, she wanted more diamonds from him, and she had them. J. B. Constant was living, in usurers' clutches, at the rate of fifty thousand francs a year, and his clothes were growing shabby, and he dined every day at a restaurant for thirty-two sous.

Valérie played in a piece in which she had to wear a robe of flame-coloured satin, and to show a considerable amount of her legs. Paris was entranced. A sculptor modelled the legs, in wax, and they were exhibited, under a glass case, in the Galerie d'Orléans. Her bust was carved. Her portrait was lithographed. Béranger went to see her. His criticism was conclusive, but not complimentary. "Vous n'êtes pas Lisette," he murmured, and walked out of the box. The romancer, M. Honoré de Balzac, then beginning to make his way in literature, looked at her, long and anxiously, through his opera-glass. "She is a Cossack in petticoats," he said, "and will occupy Paris."

Up to this time she seemed impregnable. Diamonds, from other quarters than poor Constant, were laid at her feet. She took them up and laughed in the face of the donors. She had a wonderful power of digestion. She took everything—songs, dedications, money, jewels, bouquets, love-letters, compliments, and gave nothing in return, but scorn. She was a Bacchante in cold blood. She was Venus rising from the ice.

At this time there was a great English dandy in Paris, by the name of Blunt. The French had got it into their heads that he was "Sir François Blunt, Baronet;" but, titled or untitled, they persisted in declaring him to be the wealthiest and most sumptuous of milords. He lived in great state, on a first floor in the Rue de la Madeleine. He associated with all the English aristocracy resident in or visiting Paris. He played high, at Frascati's and elsewhere. He had his baignoires at the little theatres. He gave his dinners at Véfour's, or the Rocher de Cancale; he gave his suppers at the Café Anglais. He drove a four-in-hand—a vehicle the Parisians had never set eyes upon before—a cabriolet, a phaeton, a dog-cart—he drove anything you please. He was a capital French scholar, and a great favourite in women's society. He could ply the small-sword if challenged, and could hit the ace of hearts thrown up in the air, with a pistol-shot at fifty paces.

Blunt was a great play-goer. He went to the Porte St. Martin to see the actress after whom all Paris was flocking. It is not very difficult for an Englishman, who is cultivated and fashionable, and is supposed to be rich, to procure an introduction to a French actress. He was in a short time permitted to make his obeisance to Valérie. There was a quiet mocking manner about him, a polished impertinence, which at first pleased her infinitely.

"At all events," she said, with an engaging candour to Constant, in one of the rare audiences she now granted him in the forenoon, and in her boudoir, "he is neither imbecile, like the young Frenchmen who buzz about me, nor ridiculous, like the English dandies. If he is insolent, he is witty. If he can give sharp stabs, he can take them. He pleases me, ce Sir Blunt."

She believed in the stories of his rank and wealth, although she often said that it mattered little to her whether the man she chose to favour was a prince or a rag-picker. She determined, on New Year's Day, 1832, to give a grand supper in a gorgeous new suite of apartments she had taken in the Chaussée d'Antin. Half the fashionable roués and actresses in Paris were to be there. She was good enough to ask Constant to come—and also to condescend to borrow from him a thousand francs towards the expenses of the entertainment. Constant gave her the money, and found himself at four in the afternoon of the day on which the party was to come off, with exactly twenty-seven francs in his pocket. He was proceeding to dine at his usual thirty-two sous restaurant in the Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie, when he was arrested on two bills of exchange for ten thousand francs each, held by one Nabal Pixérifort, a Jew, and was carried off to a debtors' prison.

Soon other judgments crowded in upon him, and he found himself detained for a total of sixty thousand francs. As a foreigner, he was liable to lie in prison for a long term of years, his creditors being merely bound to pay a sum of ninepence-halfpenny per diem for his maintenance; but fortunately he had not been incar-

cerated a month before he found succour. The Hummelhausens, who were worthy people, would gladly have "executed" themselves—that is to say, would have sold their hotel stock, cock and barrel—to help their suffering kinsman, but there was no need for this. An uncle of the Constants happened to die at Ticino, leaving an inheritance of two hundred thousand francs. The use of this, for her life, he left to his wife, who was eighty-two years of age, and bedridden. At her death, a hundred thousand francs were to come to Jean Baptiste, and fifty thousand to the Hummelhausens. The prisoner found no difficulty in selling his reversion for a hundred and twenty thousand francs. He paid the usurers in full, and left the whitewashed walls, comparatively a rich man.

On the day of his enlargement, and while he was treating to a vin d'honneur some of the gentleman captives in the establishment, one of the turnkeys brought him a copy of the National, asking him if he would like to look at it. The ex-innkeeper's eye fell on a paragraph, in which it was stated among the Faits Divers that one of the "illustrations dramatiques," or theatrical celebrities of the day, "la belle Mademoiselle Valérie," had suddenly broken her engagement with the direction of the Porte St. Martin, and winged her way to the "brumous" land of Albion, where she was "incessantly" to be united in marriage to the Honourable Sir Francis Blunt, Baronet, and member of the Upper Chamber.

Jean Baptiste Constant rushed out of prison to his sister. He had written to Valérie half a dozen times since his arrest, not asking for money, but craving a word of sympathy. She had not sent him one. His devotion to her was so servile, so houndlike, that he had never murmured. Madame Hummelhausen had no good news to tell him. The paragraph in the National was true. At least she had Valérie's word for its genuineness. The girl had written her a cool letter from Dover, saying that she had been married there, and that she was now Miladi Blunt. "As to Constant," she went on, "you will say to him that I am very sorry for him, but that he bored me." This was his dismissal: this his recompense for all he had done to train and nurture this beautiful devil. She had married another man. She was sorry for Constant; but he bored her; he made her yawn; she needed amusement, and the other man could amuse her. There was an end of the idyll.

Constant said nothing, but asked Madame Hummelhausen to give him the letter. "I shall go to England," he said.

"To kill Sir Blunt?" asked his sister, terrified.

"We are not in the middle ages. Lucrèce Borgia is all very well on the stage, but will not do in private life. I have been in England before. I have served in noble families. I have the most flattering testimonials. I will serve in noble families again. Good-by, my good sister. Perhaps some day I shall have the high honour to stand behind Miladi Blunt's chair."

Miladi Blunt's honeymoon was soon over. The honeymoon was very speedily followed by the beeswax-moon, and that, by the gall-and-wormwood-moon. Valérie discovered that she had wedded a gentleman with no money, and who was over head and ears in debt. Blunt told her so plainly, and that it was useless to think of going to London. They crossed from Dover to Ostend, and thence went to Brussels, where, Valérie's Paris prestige being thick upon her, she easily obtained an engagement. This was in the spring of 1832. By December in the same year, they had separated. Her accusations against her husband were no fictions. He had insulted, outraged, beaten, her. He had lived in luxury upon her earnings. She gave birth in Brussels, and at Christmas-time in this same year '32, to a child, a girl, who was christened Lily by the English chaplain resident in the Belgian capital. The day after the performance of the ceremony, Blunt deserted his wife, but took his child and his child's nurse with him. He had made an acquaintance in Brussels at this time, who lent him money, and talked to him of brilliant prospects, but whose name he kept secret from Miladi. The acquaintance accompanied him to England, and there became his valet de chambre. And this valet's name was Jean Baptiste Constant, Swiss by birth.

After her abandonment by her legitimate protector, the career of Madame Valérie Blunt was rather more varied than reputable. She did not bewail the loss of her infant much. She was more in a rage with the infant's papa. She went back to Paris, and purged her contempt towards the direction of the Porte St. Martin by payment of a round sum of money which somebody paid for her. Somebody had become necessary now; and when she grew tired of somebody, she changed somebody. But, although her beauty was now in its zenith, her prestige as an actress was gone. Some other "illustration dramatique," who showed more of her legs, wore a grass-green tunic, and had more diamonds than she, was convulsing Paris with admiration. "I will never sink to the second-rate," said Valérie. "I am tired of men and women. Let us see what can be made out of horses."

Madame Hummelhausen and her husband, going, one summer night, in 1834, to Franconi's Circus, saw Valérie, in a riding-habit and a man's hat, caracoling on a beautiful brown mare in the midst of the tan-carpeted ring. Stout Monsieur Adolphe Franconi followed her obsequiously, not so much as venturing to crack his whip. Monsieur Auriol, the clown, suspended his jokes during her performance. She was doing the haute école. Valérie of the Circus, had become a greater celebrity than Valérie of the Porte St. Martin. She was the rage. When she came to England in the summer of '35, and to Astley's Theatre, Mr. Ducrow gladly paid her thirty guineas a week salary. She came again in '37 at higher terms; but she always wanted money, and more money.

This was the lady who was good enough to patronise the Hôtel Rataplan. Constant had found her there, and walking straight up to her room, had looked at her. She would have struck him, but there was something in his look that cowed her. He was no longer humble; no longer her slave.

She held out her hand.

"Let us sign a treaty. Allons! Let us be friends!"

So, without pens or paper, and on the basis of this protocol, the treaty was signed, and they were friends, after a fashion. And now that I have kept Monsieur J. B. Constant so long with his hand on the handle of the She-Wolf's door, he may surely turn it, and go in.

VARIETIES OF MEN.

There is a large sense in which it may be said that the world about him is the making of a man. For, the world about him, as a revelation of Almighty power, is a daily teacher, and guides man himself to the full possession of what powers he was made capable of wielding. Man is shaped, also, physically and mentally, by influences of climate and food to a remarkable degree, and the study of these various shaping influences of the world he lives in, has given rise to many curious and interesting speculations. Why, for example, is the negro as black as a coal? Nobody knows. Foissac ascribes his colour to the predominance of carbon in his vegetable diet. But there is as much carbon in the blubber eaten by the Esquimaux. Berthold ascribed the browning of the complexion in hot countries, to the excess of carbon that, in spite of diminished activity of the lungs, and increased activity of the liver, circulated in the blood, and, with an increased perspiration, was deposited under the skin. Coal is carbon, so that, according to these theories, we are browned or blackened by a sort of coal formation. Heat will not do it all. The blackest peoples are not found under the equator. The blackest of the Polynesians are in the Vulcan, and the lightest in the Coral, Islands. The people of Van Dieman's Land are darker than the New Hollanders who live nearer to the equator. There are very black tribes on the east and west coast of Africa; several hundred miles inland they are lighter; but the sea has nothing to do with it, for in the central part, on the same line, they are quite black. Race, not climate, determines colour. There is a certain limited and transitory influence of light on the white skin. A fair-skinned child taken from town to the sea-side may have its face browned in a single day, and will in a month develop much unwonted colour under the constant influence of strong light and the stimulus of the fresh breezes that quicken circulation at the surface. The child goes home to town, where its cheeks are less sunned and less blown upon, there is no longer a special stimulus to fetch blood to the skin, the face returns to its old fairness, and all trace of the influence of sun and wind will vanish, unless there have been formed freckles, which sometimes are permanent. It used to be said that these freckles, to which the fairest skins are the most liable, were deposits of "fuliginous vapour" from the blood—another coal theory; and an old school of physicians represented them also as deposits of the oily or bilious part of fluids left after the evaporation of the more watery parts. In fact, however, they are little mysteries, common and harmless as they are. Generally they disappear with the summer, and their disappearance is often attributed to the washes and messes of quacks, who have no more power to make or unmake them than they would have to wash out the man in the moon, if he were there.

These obvious transitory influences, then, of light and exposure on the skin, commonly exaggerated even as signs of variation in the general health of the body, have little or nothing to do with the colours of the different races of men. The Spaniards in South America who have not by intermarriage with the Indians formed a distinct race of Mestizos, are in skin and feature Spaniards still. Those near the equator in hot and damp Guyaquil, have even a fairer and clearer complexion than the Spaniards in their native country, and blue eyes and fair hair are common among the women. In Chili, too, the Spaniards are white and of a fresher colour than in their own country. The Mexicans are much darker than the aborigines of the hottest parts of South America; the Guiacas are much lighter than the Indians round about them. Blue eyes, fair skin, and a red beard, characterise a distinct race among the Berbers of North Africa. Among the Nubians, Burckhardt recognised the descendants of the Bosnian soldiers sent by Sultan Selim, who settled there in the year fourteen 'twenty. On plantations in a region where the extinct aborigines were a dusky red, and the race now in possession has remained for generations white, the generations of the working negroes continue to be as black as their forefathers were in Africa.

To a considerable extent the body adapts itself to the requirements of each climate. Volney went so far in saying that climate determines physiognomy as to see in the negro a face acted upon by sunlight and heat, with overhanging eyebrows, half-closed eyelids, raised cheeks, and projecting jaws: while another writer, Mr. Stanhope Smith, has, upon the same principle, made Jack Frost answerable for the short, broad, harsh-featured face of the Tatar, by contracting his eyebrows and eyelids, raising his cheeks, and compelling him to keep his mouth shut as much as possible. Certain it is that the native Peruvian, living at heights of from seven thousand to fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea, becomes broad chested by need of a larger development of lung. A certain quantity of oxygen the blood requires from the air, and more room is wanted to take in a sufficient bulk of the

more rarefied air. There can be no doubt, also, that light and heat affect, to a certain extent, the growth of men as of plants. It is said to be a fact that not only the Peruvians, but the people, generally, of the colder climates, have larger heads than those who live in the hot countries. But, as for the effect of light and heat on stature, there is so much room for doubt, that flatly opposite conclusions have been come to on the subject. Zimmerman has argued from the size of the Patagonians and of the ancient Germans, that the highest stature belongs to the colder regions of the temperate zone, while Blumenbach thinks we find taller men as we approach the tropics. There is nothing in either opinion. The short men of Tierra del Fuego live very near to the tall men of Patagonia, and the short men of Lapland live very near to the tall Finns and Swedes. In the matter of stature, as of colour, descent must be considered to have far more influence than climate. Among animals it is found that some grow smaller in warm, others in cold climates.

But climate appears strongly to affect the rate of life in men and animals as in plants. Negro children run about much earlier than European children. The children of the natives of Nukahiwa swim alone in the water when they are scarcely a year old. In Tahiti they often can swim before they can run. The precocity of the Zuramatas in Guiana is found also among the white Creoles in the West Indies, and in the children born in Brazil. We hear of a negress who had two hundred descendants about her, and we are told that among the negroes it is not thought extraordinary to have a hundred grandchildren. But this precocity is not due wholly to impulse of climate. The Jewish girls in Central Europe become mature much earlier, and age much earlier, than girls of the people they live among.

There is an unmistakable influence of climate on the European race settled for some generations in America. The American, compared with the Englishman, is lean, though he grows fat after long sojourn in Europe. The Virginian—except the West Virginian—is especially tall, slender, and lean; for, the effect of American climate is more striking in the central and southern than in the northern parts, and most so among the working classes in the plains near the sea. The New Englander, of the same stock as the Virginian, is shorter, and usually round-faced. The genuine Yankee is clearly distinguished from the Englishman by his sharp angular features and the excess of breadth between the angles of his lower jaw, which makes the lower part of the face square instead of oval. The curly hair of the European is apt to become straight and stiff in America, and to grow stiffer and thicker with each generation. The long neck which usually accompanies in caricatures the long straight hair of the Yankee, indicates weaker development of the glandular system, but there is a great increase of nervous irritability. Some writers have attributed this to a predominance of dry west winds, others to the use of spirits. The voice of the true Yankee has less metal than that of the European; his eyelids are said also to be shorter. It has been said, too, that the beef and mutton of the United States shows, by defect of flavour and nutrition, as compared with that of Europe, the less favourable influence of the climate upon animal life. In New South Wales the influence of climate tends to make the children of Europeans tall and lean, while at the Cape there is among European colonists a tendency to fat.

Winterbottom asserted that lean people who are dusky become of a lighter colour upon growing fat. However that may be, there can be no doubt that the appearance and character of an animal will be affected by the degree and manner of its victualling. When, in the year sixteen 'thirty-one, Irishmen of Ulster and the south of Down were driven into the forest by the English, the poverty of their food in the woods so altered them, that, being found again at a later period, they were only five feet two inches high, big bellied, bandy legged, open mouthed, and had projecting teeth. So the stunted Bosjesmen are Hottentots driven by their enemies into a sterile country, and forced to abide there. When they fail in the chase, they will eat roots, ants, locusts, snakes, and lizards; but those of them who live on the Zuga River, and do not suffer from want, instead of being stunted brutish men, are strong and well made. The small and wretched people of Tierra del Fuego, whose wild rocky coast even obstructs free exercise of their limbs upon it, pass the greater part of their lives in huts or boats, and have legs crooked and thin from disuse: while, suffering much from cold and hunger, they are in mind and body dwarfed. Yet they are apparently of the same race as the stout Araucanians, their neighbours. In Australia, too, the lowest types of man are found in a region deficient in water and wild animals, where man is miserably fed. But of course that which is good food in one part of the world may be bad food in another. The workman in England, on a damp cold winter's day, thrives on a beefsteak and a pint of porter, while the workman in Benguela can maintain his strength on a handful of Manioc meal, and the Kru negro keeps up his condition in a life of muscular porter's work upon a diet wholly vegetable, and which consists chiefly of rice. The English, in tropical climates, do not get on so well as the Spaniards and Portuguese, because they scorn bean fritters, do not take naturally to a vegetable diet, and persist in the free use of animal food and spirituous liquors. The Buraets, and other wandering tribes of Siberia, are short and weakly through living wholly on animal food: while the South-Sea Islanders, who live on fish and vegetables, are for the most part intellectual and warlike. But, as a general rule, partly because of the advantage of bodily exercise in the hunter's case, fisher tribes are in body and mind poorer than the tribes that live chiefly on spoils of the chase. This appears very distinctly in Indians of the same race living east and west of the Rocky

Mountains. As a rule, the diet of the working classes in France is, as much by traditional usage as for want of means, less nourishing than it should be; and three times since 1789, when it was five feet one for infantry, and five feet three for cavalry, it has been found necessary to lower the standard for admission into the French army.

Where men live simply as animals of a higher order, the individuals of a tribe resemble each other as animals do. Among barbarous nations, says Humboldt, we find a tribal rather than an individual physiognomy. No varieties of intellectual development, nor of various methods of life, stamp the face with varieties of character. Thus the slave-dealer in Upper Egypt never asks for the individual character of a slave. He only asks where he was born, his character being that of his tribe. Several writers assert that the cultivated negro, without admixture of white blood, acquires something of the physiognomy of Europe, and that in a generation or two there is perceptible change in the formation of the skull, and of the nose and lips. De Salles remarks that all uncultured people have a comparatively large mouth and thick lips. Civilisation has modified noticeably the German type. High stature, light or red hair, blue eyes, and clear complexion, are no longer the universal characteristic of a German. In England, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, dark eyes and hair were uncommon, and high cheek-bones were a character of the south as of the north. In the time of Henry the Eighth red hair predominated. Any gallery of old portraits will show that three centuries have done much in highly civilised countries to soften and modify the characteristic outline of the features. There was less brain space in the skull of an ancient, than there is in that of a modern Scot.

But, where the thinking power is not much exercised, the powers of the stomach to endure long fasts and digest the food of several days in a few hours, are often developed to a wonderful degree. The camel-drivers between Cairo and Suez fast during the thirty hours of the journey; but an Arab, who dines often on a handful of dates, will sometimes be heard to boast that he can eat a sheep at a meal. The Bedouin, when travelling in the desert, takes as daily food two draughts of water, and two morsels of baked flour and milk. But, when meat is before him, and he is not travelling, he can eat and digest as much as would satisfy six Europeans. A native Australian, attendant upon Eyre, could consume an average of nine pounds of boiled meat daily. A Guarini will eat up a small calf in a few hours. A strong young man in Greenland eats daily for several months ten or twelve pounds of meat, with much biscuit. On the other hand, an Arowake lives in the field for three weeks, or a month, on ten pounds of Cassava bread. As a general rule, power of long fasting, and excessively spare living, is associated with a power of digesting, and a will to eat, enormous meals when they are to be had. Set a little Bushman who has sustained life for a fortnight upon salt and water, before a civilised Christmas dinner for twelve, and he will eat up the whole of it; turkey, sausages, beef, bread, vegetables, pudding, and mincepies; eat it, digest it, and convert it into flesh. For, a Bushman or a Caffre, after a few days of such feeding, enlarges visibly in bulk; thus showing that the food of which the system had been starved, has with extraordinary rapidity been digested, converted into blood, and used for the building up of the starved human frame.

THE BOY AND THE RING.

Fair chance held fast is merit.

A certain king
Of Persia had a jewel in a ring.
He sat it on the dome of Azud high:
And, when they saw it flashing in the sky,
Made proclamation to his royal troop,
That who should send an arrow thro' the hoop
That held the gem, should have the ring to wear.

It happen'd that four hundred archers were
In the king's company about the king.

Each took his aim, and shot, and miss'd the ring.

A boy, at play upon the terraced roof
Of a near building, bent his bow aloof
At random, and behold! the morning breeze
His little arrow caught, and bore with ease
Right thro' the circlet of the gem.

The king,
Well pleased, unto the boy assign'd the ring.

Then the boy burnt his arrows and his bow.

The king, astonish'd, said, "Why dost thou so?
Seeing thy first shot hath had great success."

He answer'd, "Lest my second make that less."

FIGHTING IN WESTERN AFRICA.

From time to time there is an angry outburst in the House of Commons because the mail brings word that there has been an expedition against some refractory chief or king on the West Coast, and that valuable lives have been lost in an action which is and must be without result. Or now and again an English enthusiast arises, who is going to regenerate the whole continent by the cultivation of cotton, and palm-oil, and ground-nuts; but the almost insuperable obstacles daunt him and he retires, having effected very little.

I knew a native merchant on this coast, he had resided in England, and was a man of great wealth and good standing. He died in Africa, and as quite an exceptional favour I was invited to be present at the "custom," or last ceremony for the dead. At the time appointed I entered a large room in which all his nearest relations were assembled. The women were at one end of the room sobbing and wailing, the men were standing or sitting round a table. A large arm-chair was placed upon this table, and in it, dressed in his best, and seated upright, was the corpse of the dead merchant. All around

were bottles and glasses, and men drank and talked of the dead man, told of his adventures, his gains and losses, his tricks in trade, and his home life; and as the drink excited them, shouts and laughter took the place of the steady recital with which they had commenced, and the voices of the women grew shriller and more piercing. In the midst of all, often adjured and appealed to, sat the ghastly and motionless corpse. Afterwards, when it was consigned to the tomb, there was with it a supply of food to be renewed daily for twelve months.

This scene is typical of the superficial civilisation which we have imposed upon a few of the natives, leaving the heart of the people untouched.

For three hundred years Africa has had the curse of being a slave-producing country—this is the corpse upon the table—and the coast tribes have learnt to consider this curse a privilege. The attitude of England, therefore, of late years, with regard to the slave trade, has considerably affected our intercourse with the natives. Instead of encouraging, we stand between them and what they consider legitimate traffic, and our preventive squadron is looked upon by the Africans with that respect without affection, with which the policeman is contemplated by the thief. We occupy the position of a foreign coast-guard, enforcing protection on a country of which the government and the inhabitants desire free trade.

Long ago we crushed down the palmy days of the slave trade, the days when De Suza at Whydah could receive the Prince de Joinville as his guest. No second Don Pedro Blanco of Gallinas can amass treasures by this unholy traffic, and return to Europe to obtain celebrity under another name. But in the place of the few well-known "barracoons" there has been a gigantic company on the principle of "Limited Liability." Every creek and bay of every river on the coast has its depôt, and can furnish slaves for any vessel which will attempt to elude the vigilance of our squadron. The slave trade has thus become a kind of gambling speculation, and has put an effectual stop to any legitimate trade or true civilisation. In affecting the coast tribes it has affected the only tribes coming under our influence, and it is on this account that after two or three hundred years of European colonisation we find ourselves still in contact with savages.

The English settlements on the coast are comparatively unimportant, and the number of armed men occupying the military stations would be ridiculously small were it not for the formidable police of the sea which supports them. Still the native tribes seldom openly oppose the white man; but they trick, and cheat, and cajole him. If a very favourable opportunity occur, a treaty is violated, the traders are robbed and threatened, and it is plainly seen by those on the spot that there is a necessity for action. But the governor of a station on the coast does not punish offenders until compelled to do so by very great provocation, and in order to secure the actual safety of English subjects or allies.

In England the war is unpopular; its cause seems remote enough, but the result is absolutely inappreciable. It brings neither honour nor gain. Your opponents may be brave, but they are savages, and don't know when they are beaten. They will rise again in a month or a year, or whenever a new king mounts the "stool" of the country. They won't pay the fine you impose, and they won't observe the treaties they sign. And we send our best men against them, to be shot at with a gun which costs *four dollars*.

There is a king, say the King of Burrabaloo, who is chief of a powerful tribe, say the Woolahs, on the banks of a great river, say the Great Gombaru. For several years this king ignores treaties, plunders Europeans, declines paying his debts, and ridicules the threat of a fine. Then he goes a step further, and treats with "personal disrespect" an officer of the government of Gombaru sent to obtain redress for the sufferers. Lastly, he utterly disregards the blockade of his port. There is no help for it, and we must submit. But at length the West India reliefs arrive, increasing the land force, and the naval force is augmented by the arrival of a man-of-war in the River Gombaru. It is resolved to bind the King of Burrabaloo and his Marabouts to keep the peace *for the future;* reparation for the past is not even spoken of.

At the mouth of the Gombaru River stands Bofarra, and there, in the beginning of February, any year in this century, we had eleven companies of the 98th and 99th West India Regiments, the Gombaru artillery, and one troop of French artillery. For the governor of the French station on the River Samahu, had also many grievances against the King of Burrabaloo, so he had offered to join us.

This modest force embarked in the Swan, a vessel of two thousand tons, her Majesty's ships Margate and Hastings, and five sailing transports.

The Gombaru, at its mouth, is from four to five miles broad, deep and muddy, and abounding in sharks and alligators. The banks are densely wooded, but in this part the size of the trees is inconsiderable, and one shore is covered with bush or scrub.

We made our way slowly up the stream; the heat was fearful, there was not a breath of air, the dull muddy water flowed silently, without a ripple, looking like oil in the fierce sunlight. The only living thing we saw was now and again a crane standing silent and solitary, or an alligator slipping lazily from the bank into the river.

At length the night fell, and with it a thick greasy fog which wetted everything. It is a great mistake to send troops up these rivers in sailing transports. The powers that be, though of course the most sagacious of all possible powers, do not sufficiently estimate the danger likely to accrue from a protracted voyage; and protracted it is sure to be when the utmost made in a day by the sailing vessels, even with the

boats towing ahead, is twenty-five miles, and not always that. We anchored for the night off Fort Alfred. This fort consists of about four acres of grass, with one gun placed defiantly in the centre. On all festive occasions the gun is supplied with a limited quantity of powder, and crammed with grass up to the muzzle. It astonishes the natives, and duly asserts and proclaims the birthday of her Majesty the Queen, the landing of his Excellency the Governor, or any other legitimate cause for rejoicing.

We found nothing worthy of note at Fort Alfred, except the mosquitoes and sand-flies. The former were very hairy and determined. Fortunately they were not unanimous in their attack, or we must have been dragged through the port-holes and into the river.

As we advanced next day, the banks were covered with gigantic mangroves, sixty or seventy feet high. They formed a dense, impenetrable jungle, and with their arching roots made a forest both above and beneath the water. The sun was again fierce and hot; our paint blistered; the tints of the mangrove—from palest green to dark olive—glowed in it, and the sullen flowing river reflected it back, as if the surface were of steel. The jungle abounded with yelling parrots and pretty little red monkeys. We passed three pelicans; one of them received a charge of shot, and uttered a sound something between the squeal of a pig and the noise caused by sharpening a saw.

In this part of the river hippopotami abound, and every now and then huge uncouth heads appeared above the surface; one matron rose with her offspring sitting on the back of her neck.

Next, the mangroves disappeared, and the banks to the water's edge were clothed with palmetto, palmyra, date-palm, and palm-oil trees. The palm-nuts hung in splendid clusters, and in a palm-grove we came to a colony of dog-faced monkeys. They barked and raced from tree to tree, and made most ludicrous faces at us.

It was not only the beauty of the trees which one admired, but the luxuriance of the orchids, and the creepers, and the gigantic convolvuli, heavy with blossom. We saw flocks of cranes, of all sorts and descriptions, great baobabs with enormous fruit and scanty leaves, a profusion of growth, a grandeur which it is impossible to surpass, but which is depressing, because it seems to have superseded humanity.

At length, after a weary voyage, we reached the mouth of the Tambacunda Creek, and dropped anchor.

On the following morning the storming party, consisting of three companies of the 99th West Indian Regiment, were transhipped from the Swan to the Hastings. The Swan could not pass the bar at the mouth of the creek; if she had been able to do so, she would have found plenty of water inside. The entrance to the creek is very narrow, but it soon widens out to about three-quarters of a mile, and, as the banks are not very densely clothed, glimpses are to be got of a tolerably open plain country.

After steaming an hour and a half, we arrived off the landing-place, about eight miles from the entrance to the creek. The enemy had thrown up a breastwork, flanked by an earthwork its whole length of two hundred yards. There were natives occupying it; and chiefs, with their long robes streaming in the wind, were dashing about on horseback and brandishing their lances. Before commencing operations the governor gave them a last chance, and summoned them to surrender; but they answered that *they were all men there*, and that if we thought we could land, we had better try. They were then told, that if, at the expiration of an hour they did not clear out, we should open fire. This was done to enable the Hastings to moor, and take up her position: also to give time for the Ramsgate to come up, and the other vessels with the troops. Just as the hour expired the Ramsgate hove in sight towing two ships, and the Hastings fired her broadside. A column of dust fifty feet high rose from the earthwork, and there was a roar from the adversary, who kept up a spattering fire henceforth on all that showed themselves. We saw a large gap where the sixty-eight pounder had gone through, but the twenty-fours did not seem to do much more than stir up the dust. As the ships came up one by one, and took their positions, a heavy fire of musketry was commenced, and no head or hand could be shown above the embankment without a hole being made in it. One fellow excited universal admiration. He was a tearing mad Mollah, or greegree man, quite covered with greegrees and strips of the Koran. He jumped on the top of the embankment and walked deliberately along it from end to end, screaming his war-cry, and waving his sword. He was the mark for a thousand rifles, pointed by practised riflemen, yet he escaped unscathed. On his passing back, a shell burst close to him, smothering him with dust. We thought he was gone; but when the dust cleared away he stood there safe, and after a farewell shake of his sword and a yell, he jumped down into the trench.

At the end of four hours, it appeared that the damage done to the earthwork was so small that it would present just as many difficulties to the storming party as it would have done before the firing commenced. The captain of the Hastings wanted to keep up the firing till sun-down, and then to begin again next morning, and keep on until he had knocked a hole in the embankment. The colonels of the two regiments inclined to this course, for, if we landed in small boats, somebody would certainly be shot, and possibly a good many somebodies. But the major, who commanded the storming party, begged hard to be allowed to land, if only with his own regiment. He was ready to stake his commission on clearing the enemy out of the earthwork, and covering the landing of the main body.

He was some thirty years younger than the two colonels, and more enthusiastic; perhaps, too, at eight-and-twenty a man has more stomach for fighting than in after life. Anyhow it was

decided to storm, and the boats were piped. While standing on the bulwark to superintend the embarkation, the first lieutenant of the Hastings was shot through the leg by a party with an elephant gun, who had already favoured four men on board with bullets in different parts. It is a neat thing, this elephant gun, carries a two ounce ball, and has a report like a twenty-four pounder. At length, we of the storming party were all in the boats, getting in, of course, on the sheltered side so that the enemy could not tell what we were doing. The Hastings and Ramsgate fired incessantly, and their shell practice was, I believe, remarkably good, but at that moment one had hardly time to admire it.

The boats shoved off, rounded the stern of the Hastings, and the men began to give way for the shore; then, despite what he himself had said and enforced all the morning, about men keeping behind the bulwarks and not exposing themselves, the captain jumped up into the rigging, cap in hand. In half a minute, the crew were there too, and gave us three such cheers as sailors only can give; the other ships took it up, and away we went, cheering in return. We got a volley when within fifty yards, but it did not stop us. Everybody jumped overboard, waist deep, into the mud and water, and rushed on shore.

A lieutenant of the 99th took a somewhat unfair advantage of the other boats. He is reported to have stood over his own boat's crew with a revolver, and to have threatened something desperate if any one were on shore before him. With this reward in view, they exerted themselves to such good purpose that he was a whole boat's length in advance. Being Irish, when he landed he sang out: "Hooroo! Ush! Ye divils!" and dashed at the trench.

A captain of the French artillery came to an arrangement of a peculiar nature with a captain of the 99th. Of course the Frenchman's guns, mules, and horses, could not be put on shore until the landing was secured, and a basis of operation established: so he proposed to serve with the 99th as a volunteer. He and the English captain were to take hold of each other's hands, and jump on shore together. This they did, and then the Frenchman saluted, fell into the ranks, and kept his dressing: loading and firing like a private.

The landing-place was secured, and the 99th advanced in skirmishing order towards the brow of a hill about half a mile inland. The intermediate space was a rice-swamp extending from the river bank; the bank was thinly fringed with mangrove bushes, and dotted with rifle-pits. We passed them, and reached the hill, which was covered with trees. Some of the enemy still held this position, but were easily driven out, and there was a broad plain before us three or four miles in length; there was a crop of ground-nuts on it.

The men passed on, two companies skirmishing and one in reserve, when all of a sudden there was a yell and a cloud of dust on the left. The bugles rang out, the men doubled in and formed square, and it seemed at first as if the enemy must be among us immediately. The Woolahs came on yelling and screaming to within two hundred yards, when we fired a volley; there were three or four empty saddles, and away they went. Two or three of them, with more pluck than the others, rode up at a splitting gallop, and then turned, and, when they were broadside on, wheeled right round in the saddle, and fired their muskets into the square, going at a gallop all the time. They ride like Arabs, with short stirrups, and a broad flat stirrup-iron like a shoe, and with a high peak and cantle to the saddle.

Meanwhile, the Irish lieutenant and his company had advanced on the right in pursuit of the enemy and were out of sight. They came to a large town over the hill, and formed the praiseworthy intention of taking it; but the enemy, whom they had followed, finding how few their pursuers were, took heart, turned round, and drove them out.

But the lieutenant re-formed his men at two hundred yards from the town—the Woolah guns are useless at that distance—and kept up a fire on all who showed themselves. Finding that no support came up, he and four men rushed back into the town under a heavy fire from the enemy, and succeeded, by aid of a lucifer-match and a fire-stick, in setting fire to it. As the wind was fresh, the bamboo and wattle blazed up fiercely. The lieutenant then began to retire with his company; some fifty or sixty horsemen made a rush, but received a volley and withdrew, just as the support came up. For this, the lieutenant gets the Victoria Cross.

It was now half-past five P.M. The enemy was showing in great numbers, and the tropical night drawing on, so the retire was sounded all along the line. As we were on our way back, we heard the heavy sound of the Hastings's sixty-eight, and whistling and shrieking high over our heads went a ten-inch shell. To the uninstructed it appeared to be seeking an enemy in the clouds, but it soon began to descend, and dropped bursting in the midst of a crowd of advancing Woolahs two miles off. We had not seen them, but they had been discerned from the ship. They afterwards told us that the shell killed fifteen men.

Our camp for the night was fixed in the swamp at the edge of the creek, and, as nothing had been landed, we were not very luxuriously settled. Some of us, however, set to work to collect wood and grass, started a roaring fire with ample provision for keeping it up, took a pull of cold brandy-and-water till the kettle boiled, and then lay down in our cloaks, smoked a pipe, and talked over the events of the day. There was some little firing from the advanced pickets, but, on the whole, a quiet enough night, and sound sleep for every one.

Early rising was a necessity the next morning, for the bugles, fifes, and drums, left no possibility of rest. Then there were wells to be dug, and water to be examined, and finally there was a

luxurious breakfast of ration pork, fried in the lid of a camp-kettle; the sugar and coffee had been put into the kettle itself, and boiled together.

Kolar, the town which the Irish lieutenant had partly burnt the previous day, was attacked and destroyed; but there was very little else done worth mentioning. The enemy carried away their killed and wounded, so that we saw none except those actually killed in the advance.

As usual, we were embarrassed by our native allies. They did not understand civilised warfare, and seemed to merit the epithets of cowardly and murderous. They wouldn't go in advance, but after our troops had driven the Woolahs out of any place, these wretches rushed in to loot, and murdered any unfortunate who might have been unable to escape.

On this day the guns and mules of the French captain were landed. The mules were splendid animals, sixteen hands high. They were fitted with pack-saddles, and one mule carried the gun, whilst another carried the limber and wheels. They are much better suited to a savage country than our artillery. Although we had four horses to a twelve-pounder, they could not get on at the pace the mules did.

On the following day our force in the river was increased; for an admiral came up in the Spitfire, a commodore in the Valiant, and with them H.M.S. Hawk. About four hundred seamen and marines were landed; also the commodore, and a gallant colonel, the governor of Musseguiob.

We formed in front of the encampment at three P.M., and marched on Baloo and Kahome, with about fifteen hundred men. The marines were very fine fellows, and they came out splendidly in contrast with the Zouave dress and black faces of the West India regiments. The sailors looked on the expedition as a *lark*, but highly disapproved of the conduct of the enemy, at whom they discharged many expressive adjectives and other expletives, significant of disgust at their not showing "more fight." For the Woolahs would never wait till we came up; they *bolted* from Baloo, and so they did again from Kahome. We really thought they were going to make a stand at Kahome, and there were guns to the front, and shell and rocket practice. Upon this, the enemy retired into the town, the guns limbered up, the sailors, marines, and the 99th advanced; there were two or three volleys, a rush, and Kahome was taken.

Who could wonder that the people of Burrabaloo did not stand? They learnt the very first day that we had a gun which killed to a certainty at a thousand yards while theirs was uncertain at a hundred; and, in addition, we had field-pieces, howitzers, and rockets, which the prisoners told us destroyed all their calculations.

Sailors are capital creatures, but their manners and customs are sometimes objectionable. On entering Kahome, the Woolahs had disappeared, and, as there was no enemy, one very hairy sailor rushed into a house to secure a goat, the goat ran into an inner room; but, finding no exit there, returned full tilt, and, as Jack stood in the doorway, jumped over his shoulders. Jack, without the slightest hesitation, turned round and fired after him. A medical officer happened to be leaning against the side of the door, and the bullet passed nearer to his head than was agreeable. "Jack," says his pal outside, "you've nearly shot the doctor." "Have I now!" says Jack, with great frankness; "take a drink, your honour."

Later on, we met a large flock of sheep. This was too much for the sailors; every man fired in any and every direction; and how it was that they did not make a "body" of some one, I can't tell.

The town was now on fire; and, as we had marched ten miles in the sun, we were very tired. The marines were resting, when they saw a crowd approaching, so they jumped up and fell in. But a black fellow came running up, and shouted, "Don't fire, don't fire! We your friends!" If they were, they took a strange way of showing it; for they came up to within a hundred yards, and then fired a volley. This was not looked on as a friendly act, and the marines returned it with interest, so our "friends" retreated, leaving their dead on the field.

At SIX P.M. we began to retire; the marines and blue-jackets first, and then the 98th; the 99th covering the movement. It was soon dark, but we had light enough from the burning towns in our path. The stacks of ground-nuts burned with great fury; and, after the blaze was out, caked and looked like iron at a white heat. The enemy's cavalry—report said the king had a thousand—followed us at a respectful distance. If they had had any dash, they might have cut off a good many of us, as we were obliged to halt repeatedly to allow stragglers to come up.

Close to the camp, the bullets again began to whistle about our ears, and our first idea was that the Woolahs had attacked it. But it was only our noble native allies who were celebrating the victory by discharging their guns, neither knowing nor caring whom they might hit.

Two or three days passed. Our camp in the swamp was, of course, frightfully unhealthy, and the loss of men would have been very great had it not been for the action and excitement of the campaign. At length, after many urgent representations, the controlling powers were persuaded to move to higher ground, and we encamped on the crest of the ridge. Here, we were troubled with dust-storms. You would see a spiral column of dust, thirty or forty feet high, and confined to a space of about a hundred yards, coming towards you. It fills eyes, nose, ears, and hair with sand, upsets everything movable, and strikes your tent unless it is very firmly fixed.

During the day the thermometer stood at a hundred and ten degrees in the shade—rather warm for the work we had; moreover, sleeping in one's clothes for a week in this climate, does

not promote comfort. Also, the mosquitoes and sand-flies were more determined, and more hairy than ever.

A prisoner brought in a day or two later, said that the King of Burrabaloo was greatly enraged at our taking and destroying Kahome, as it is regarded here as a sort of Mecca. The Woolahs are Mahomedans, and nearly every house in Kahome had a Koran in it. But it appeared that the town was not so completely destroyed as we had imagined, and that the king had sent his chief warriors and two of his sons thither, and that they had orders to hold Kahome against "a mile of white men."

On receiving this intelligence, the colonels and the commodore determined to march at once against Kahome. For, if the Woolahs would stand and fight, we might give them a severe lesson, and so end the war.

Once more the marines and blue-jackets were brought in from their ships, and once more we marched against Kahome. We found it defended by a stockade about nine feet high, constructed of small trees stuck some four feet into the ground; a breastwork and a trench were behind this, so that it was impossible to hit a man inside, unless you were on higher ground and fired down on him. There seemed to be a great many people in the town. Our shot, shell, and rockets, did no damage worth speaking of to the stockade and earthwork, so it was determined to storm. Sailors and marines formed the storming party, supported by the 98th; the 99th in reserve.

The sailors rushed up to the stockade, and, in another minute, would have been over; when, by one of those unfortunate accidents which can never be explained, a bugle sounded to retire. There was a moment of hesitation, the enemy fired a heavy volley, and the first lieutenant of the Valiant, and some twenty or thirty of the sailors, fell.

The governor of Musseguiob was only a spectator; but, when the gallant soldier saw the men halting within ten yards of the place and falling fast, he galloped up, jumped from his horse, and cheered them on, hat in hand. Again the advance was sounded, again they rushed at the stockade. There being no means of getting in, the sailors doubled round the side, and fairly heaved one another over, rolling into the midst of the Woolahs. The flag-lieutenant of the Valiant was the first man in, and immediately a Woolah clouted him on the head with a clubbed musket. But a sailor bayoneted the Woolah and helped up the flag-lieutenant, not much the worse. The jolly old commodore was the second man heaved over, with—I think, a riding-whip in his hand, but of this I am not certain—it may have been a sword. Anyway, he did not use it, but quietly pointed with it, desiring a sailor to stick a man who was making himself unpleasant.

Once in, a scene began neither pleasant to describe nor to witness. The sailors, maddened by the loss of their officers and comrades, dashed at the Woolahs with the bayonet, and the Woolahs fought to the last, no quarter being asked or given. In about five minutes one hundred and fifty men were killed, and every man fell where he stood. Among the killed, were the two sons of the king, and several chiefs. It was a gallantly contested action; but, when once our men were in, the Woolahs stood no chance.

When the sailors were advancing, an officer of the 98th rode his horse straight up to the stockade and hung his bridle over the top, intending to jump in; but he was shot through the leg, and his horse was shot dead. A black sergeant of the 99th, before the advance was annoyed by a man lying outside the stockade, who kept taking pot shots at him; and, at last, hit him in the calf of the leg. The black sergeant's gun was empty, so he snatched one from a comrade, rushed close to the stockade through the thickest of the firing, and discharged his gun full in his enemy's face. He then returned to the ranks, and immediately fell from pain and loss of blood. When the first lieutenant of the Valiant was killed, a sailor walked deliberately up and looked through the stockade at the man who shot him. Then he took his musket like a spear, with the bayonet fixed, darted it through, and transfixed him.

The French do things we can never manage to achieve. As soon as the action was over, our French ally sent mules with panniers that carried two men each, for the conveyance of the wounded sailors. Then began the march home, and although a decided victory had been gained, it was not joyous, for we were taking our dead and wounded with us. The sailors were buried in the river next morning at eight A.M., and very melancholy the dead march sounded, as it came faintly over the broad, silent river.

Sailors, I think, have more feeling and less feeling than any other class of the community. They were as bloodthirsty and remorseless as the savages who opposed them while they were fighting; but they were as tender and careful as women over their sick comrades. It was very touching to see them handing their wounded from the Hastings to their own boats when they arrived abreast the Valiant. A great boatswain, with his eyes full of tears, supported his messmate's head, and handled him as tenderly as a mother would her child; two hours before he had been yelling like a savage inside the stockade, and driving his bayonet through the body, or dashing out the brains, of a Woolah.

And so the war ended, as it must end always when organised and well-disciplined troops encounter savages. The Woolahs were thrashed, and their king was humbled. He promised to behave better for the future, and to pay a fine. He did behave a little better for a little while, but he never paid the fine, and so the war is ready to begin again.

Instead of the King of Burrabaloo, and his Marabouts, and the tribe of Woolahs and the town of Kahome, take any king on any part of

the coast, and his fetish men, and his tribe, and his chief town, and the same story may be told.

A GRUMBLE.

Only the other day, being in London, I went into a shop in Holborn, and asked for a boot-jack.

"They are almost quite gone out, sir," said the man; "since these short boots with the elastic sides came in, we are never asked for the article; don't sell one a year, sir."

"Good Heavens! To think," says Ralph Winterston, of Winterston Hall, in the county of Suffolk (who was with me), "that I should live to see a generation subsisting without boot-jacks! Take my word for it, men who begin by leaving off boot-jacks will not stop there. There is no limit, sir, to the innovations of a speculative age."

There was a time when ladies at court drank ale, and ate beef and sturgeon for breakfast. Why? Because it was healthy? No, because it was the custom; and custom, rational or not, must be obeyed. A reign or two later, they took to draughts of a Chinese leaf soaked in hot water. It is true the new beverage was found to injure the nerves, and produce diseases hitherto unknown, such as "indigestion," the "vapours," "nervous affections," &c. Tea had been adopted without thought, its effects, therefore, were unthought of. It may, or may not have effected a change in the constitution of our English race. Doctors of the present day find that their patients cannot be bled as their ancestors were. They have less blood; they make less blood; they sink if too much of it is taken from them. There are people who lay all this to tea. Calmly, what is tea? We soak a brown leaf, brought from China, in hot water, and drink a pint of it, almost boiling, morning and evening. On the stomach exhausted and torpid with eight hours fast, and on the stomach filled with a hearty dinner, we pour pints of hot water, and yet men who study physical training almost forbid any hot liquid. Must all customs go on for ever because they have once begun? The robust vigorous people of Elizabeth's time, who wrote robust verse, and saved England, and worried Spain, and defied the Pope, all in a sturdy way, did not drink tea, but ale and sherry. I must admit that they were scrofulous, scorbutic, and grey when quite young; I do not say that they were more vigorous because they did not drink tea, but I throw it out.

Students have written eloquently on tea. They describe its influence as rising to the brain in a calming, balmy way; quieting, clearing. I am, however, suspicious of a beverage that has such rapid influences on the brain. It may have after results too, may it not? As for ale, we all know what that does; it fills, fattens, and cheers, in an open straightforward way.

Nervous and brain diseases are now the predominant diseases, thanks to railway travelling, the fretting cares of money-making, and social ambition. In the time of the Georges, when the stomach was worked more than the brain, and every London club could boast its cluster of six bottle men—in the days of gout-producing port and gross eating—gastric disease was more prevalent. Take a gallery of old portraits, and you will at once pick out the men of the gastric age, small eyes, red cheeks, three chins, short necks, stocky beefy men, of the Admiral Keppel, Alderman Beckford, Charles James Fox type. Now, I ask any one did those drinkers of port think of the gout, or consider whether Portuguese wine, plus the brandy, was healthy? No. They bowed to tyrannous King Custom in a fine stupid old obstinate way, and left the gout and their estates to their punier children.

In the old times, when Scotland traded more directly with her old friend France, every well-to-do body in the Lowlands drank claret. When a Bordeaux vessel came into a Scotch port, the town crier went round with a cask of wine in a cart and sold stoups of it at the door to any one who hailed him. Now, claret is a rarity, and the small lairds drink endless toddy. Can that great change in diet have taken place without some corresponding changes in the national constitution. No, I say again; yet who heeds a change so vital? Did not Spain go down when she took to chocolate? Have not the Russians grown tame on tea and tobacco? Their political system can have nothing to do with it. Very well, then—and yet they call me testy when I complain of the folly of blindly and unthinkingly following new fashions.

New fashions in dress produce new diseases. Diphtheria, that infectious form of sore-throat, is said to have originated in the modern custom of wearing low, turn-down collars, instead of the old stiff white walls, which now mark so conspicuously the middle-aged man. The national throat, guarded for so many centuries by ropes of muslin, black velvet solitaires, lace collars, and other knick-knacks, was suddenly stripped of all its defences, and thrown open to all the rude winds of the English year. The result blossoms out in the disagreeable form of diphtheria, nature's terrible warning of the danger, and simultaneous correction of the folly. To be sure, I *have* heard that the fashion of high shirt-collars had something to do with hiding marks of disease in the neck and face. But I don't believe it.

There is one comfort, that if new diseases come in, old diseases die out. Where is the leprosy of the middle ages, now we wear linen shirts? Where is the plague of London? Where the sweating-sickness, and the black death, and the "stop-gallant"? Even the ague is on its last legs, and I trust the time may come when, mackintosh getting cheaper and more durable, an English labourer may grow old without being bent double by rheumatism, or tortured and twisted and cramped till his legs get as thin as German flutes.

It is rather a humiliating fact that semi-

savages dress more sensibly and more to the purpose than civilised nations. The negro's waistband, the South American's poncho, the Russian's woolly coat, are perfect for their special purposes. But what Fiji would wear our black hat? What aboriginal would not dance on it in sheer disgustful contempt? It is costly, frail, lets in the rain, does not keep out the sun, attracts the wind, is unfit to travel or to sleep in, is ugly, uncomfortable, cold, yet has existed now in full fashion for some seventy years—ever since the First Consul's time, in fact—and it defies all reformation. Stupid type of Chinese changelessness that it is. It has spread over all Europe, and reigns predominant wherever civilisation is.

The history of English dress is an epitome of human folly; old satirists of centuries past laugh at us for our caprice and imitativeness. We always copied the French in dress, and the Italians in music. Our armour was the only real dress that was thoroughly adapted to its purpose, and that never changed till a change was indispensable either for splendour or defence. The knight never ceased adding scale and plate, till he grew into a perfect lobster of steel—dangerous to others, but himself impenetrable. Unfortunately, just as this result was attained, in came gunpowder, and blew all the strong men in armour away.

People who wore wigs and hoops could not afford to laugh at any one, but we reformed and sensible people can now venture to smile at those Polish boots of Richard the Second's time, whose toes, a yard long, were fastened with silver chains at the knees; and at the horned head-dress of Edward the Third's reign, that drove some learned prelates almost to insanity. Richard the Second's time was, indeed, the coronation time of dandyism, for then men wore long jagged sleeves, and robes glittering with heraldic devices, and they rioted in parti-coloured hose, one leg red, and the other blue, and hung silver bells to their tunics, and generally made consummate fools of themselves, but in a splendid and gorgeous manner.

In Edward the Third's magnificent reign, however, people dressed sensibly enough. The light surtout with the jewelled belt, the useful hood, were as becoming as they were well invented; the hood especially, was a most admirable adaptation of old classic dress, and will never die out. It is still much used on the Continent, and, only lately, hoods have been universally introduced into the costume of the Russian army.

In Henry the Seventh's time, Flemish trade led to our adoption of those half Oriental head robes, so heavy, grave, and voluminous, that one sees in Van Eyck's pictures, and in the chef-d'œuvre of Quentin Matsys. This head tire has a turban-like border, it rises in huge bag-like folds over the head, or falls in cumbrous drapery upon the robed shoulders. It gave a certain dignity to the large fleshy noses and grim hard faces of that great pre-Lutheran epoch. It typified the solid heads it covered.

In the next reign, this semi-turban fell away to a jaunty Italian or French cap—a mere velvet tartlet, garnished with lace, and tufted with a side feather—the cap that everybody wears in the Huguenots. Square, tow-padded shoes, and short slashed coats, accompanied this cap.

The alert, vivacious, sensible age of Elizabeth brought in a sensible dress: an alert tight-fitting doublet, a short energetic cloak, sensible shoes, knee-breeches, that set off the foot and left the leg at full liberty to storm Cadiz or follow Raleigh up a ship's side. Still it was a luxurious dress, expensive, keeping apart classes, too much belaced and bejewelled. Charles the First's reign, or rather the progress of free thought and the independence of the middle class, led to a more sombre and Spanish style of dress, saddened here and there by the scruples of Puritanism. With Charles the Second, we abandoned lace collars, and became more sober in colours. With William we grew Dutch, gave up silks and velvets and frequent changes, for square-skirted cloth coats, square-cut shoes, heavy jack-boots, and lace cravats.

And here a word on wigs. A certain king of moderate intellect and considerable ambition, vice, and intolerance, becomes bald. He adopts a flowing black wig, and henceforth for one hundred and thirty years or so, people shave their hair in order to wear other people's fleeces, for which they have to give forty and fifty guineas. How few people questioned the wisdom of this? It was not till after George the Third came to reign that wigs began to die out, and at about the French Revolution time they slowly passed away. Yet even now, do not judges and barristers still wear those absurdities, and rejoice in them, and flourish them in our eyes, and shake them at each other in heats of verbal battle?

The French Revolution made the first real sensible improvements in dress. It took from us the muslin bolster, and gave us black silk neckerchiefs; it threw away the old head wig for real living hair; it started the swallow-tail coat and trousers; it abolished the cocked-hat; and tossed away the sword.

And here a word about the sword. Never was a more mischievous custom tolerated in a civilised country than that of civilians habitually carrying swords. It was not because highwaymen rendered the suburbs of London dangerous by night, that swords were worn. It was because it was the custom, as it had been the custom, without reason, and originating no one knew why. From the time of Elizabeth, to that of George the Third, when the custom, a little before the French Revolution, died out, hundreds of brave but hot-brained young men (the very flower of England) perished in duels, for the most part resulting from this senseless custom. Take up any book of our criminal trials of the sword-bearing times, and you will find it full of trials for manslaughter, originating simply in this habit of wearing swords. A party of young men met at a city tavern. They emptied several bottles of claret, and then

began gambling. A quarrel ensued. One whips off his wig and tosses it in the face of another. There is a rush to the swords that have been hung upon the wall. There is a riot of swords, a swift stinging thrust, and one poor lad reels against the wainscot, his hand to his side. The waiters rush up with fresh lights, and find that one of the gentlemen in the blue parlour has been run through in the scuffle, and is already past the help of surgeon. The murders, also, were innumerable that arose from passionate men in a moment of frenzy, of malice, envy, hatred, or jealousy, suddenly resorting to the deadly weapons carried at their sides.

A noxious and ridiculous custom has already attained the age of sixty years. Need I say I allude to the swallow-tailed coat and the evening dress suit? Was ever such a grim, ugly, undertaker's costume ever devised? But no! it was not devised by any one; it grew by degrees into a custom. No one introduced it, no one invented it, it is merely the old George the Third coat sloped away until no front is left, and then dyed black. In the Walpole days who would have dreamed of abolishing colour: a thing that all humanity delights in, or limiting the material of dress coats to cloth? The modish people who went then to masquerades, and to Ranelagh, and the Pantheon, wore silk and velvet coats, maroon, cinnamon colour, claret, olive green, and such hues, and their waistcoats were silver laced or tambour worked. I do not say these garments should be revived; but I do say that in right of their cheerful contrasts and varieties of hues, the people who wore them were in better taste than we, their self-satisfied descendants, are.

What use are the swallow tails? Are they beautiful? Do they help us to steer ourselves? They render the coat lighter and less in the way when we are dancing, or when we are in a crowd, and that is the most that can be said for them. Black, too, is good for the complexion, and wears well; it levels us all to one broad even class, and admits of no vulgar assertion of wealth or rank.

THE CRUISE OF THE ALABAMA.

Towards the close of the last century, when the United States were young, and their friend France was at war with England, a treaty between the French and American republics was made to include a clause that forbade the enemies of France to fit out privateers in American ports. The French interpreted this as their own right in such ports to fit out, arm, and man privateers for harassing the commerce of England, then at peace with the United States. The American government denied the assumed right, and demanded at Paris the recal of M. Genet, the representative of France in the United States, by whom it was being not only asserted but acted upon. He was fitting out and arming vessels, providing commissions for them, and enlisting American citizens for land and sea service. A message to Congress from Washington procured at the same time the passing of the first Foreign Enlistment Act of America. This act made it high misdemeanour, with a penalty of fine and imprisonment, to be "knowingly concerned in the furnishing, fitting out, or arming" of any vessel with intent that it shall be employed by any foreign prince, or state, colony, district, or people, for aggression against any other prince, or state, &c., with whom the United States were at peace. It became high misdemeanour, also, with a fine of a thousand instead of ten thousand dollars, and a penalty of one year's instead of three years' imprisonment, for any person within the limits of the United States to augment the force of an armed vessel belonging to a state at war with any other state that was at peace with the Americans. The act further provided the collectors of customs with authority "to detain any vessel manifestly built for warlike purposes, of which the cargo shall principally consist of arms and munitions of war, when the number of men shipped on board, or other circumstances, shall render it probable" that such vessel is meant to cruise or commit hostilities upon any people with whom the United States are at peace, until the decision of the President be had thereon, or a bond given. Such was the first American Foreign Enlistment Act of seventeen 'ninety-four, so far as it concerned the fitting out of privateers. Its provisions were incorporated in the new act of eighteen 'eighteen, and our own Foreign Enlistment Act of a year later nearly corresponds with it.

Our English act, like the American, was passed when occasion called for it. In eighteen 'seventeen the people of England sympathised with the revolt of the Spanish colonies in South America against their mother country. Spain complained that material aid against her was sent openly by British subjects; transports were chartered to carry ammunition, ships of war were prepared in our ports, not only did English officers go out, but organised regiments of men were formed and despatched. The English government forbade by proclamation the despatch of supplies to either belligerent. But it was doubted whether our existing laws applied to unrecognised governments, and whether British subjects aiding Spanish colonists were liable to penalty under the statute law. To insert a clause in the old act disposing of this doubt, and to remit the old common law penalty of death for enlisting in foreign service without license (a penalty that prevented juries from convicting), the Foreign Enlistment Act now in force with us was passed in the year eighteen 'nineteen. Its seventh section is to the effect that if any person in any part of his Majesty's dominions, here or beyond the seas, shall without royal license "equip, furnish, fit out, or arm," or procure to be dittoed, or shall knowingly aid, assist, or be concerned in the dittoing of any vessel to be employed by any sort of people, or real or assumed government, against any other ditto at peace with England, "as a

transport or storeship, or with intent to cruise or commit hostilities . . . . . or shall issue or deliver any commission for any ship or vessel" with like intent, such offender shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour, he shall be punished with fine and imprisonment, and the vessel, with whatever may belong to, or be on board of it, shall be forfeited. And it shall be lawful for any officer of his Majesty's customs or excise, or any officer of his Majesty's navy, empowered to make seizure under existing laws of trade and navigation, to make seizure accordingly. Neither the American nor the English acts were founded on allegation of the selling and building of vessels. Neither act, therefore, contained words that forbid the commerce of building and selling, if a trader really can build and sell without having equipped, furnished, fitted out, or armed for purposes of war. Here is the place in the act through which the coach and four goes.

Hitherto no conviction has been sustained under our own Foreign Enlistment Act, although of late it has become necessary that the English government should seek to enforce all its provisions, and a case has arisen, that of the Alexandra, in which a hard battle at law has been fought. It is argued on behalf of the pocket of the English shipbuilder, that he may take orders of any belligerent without any regard for the use to which his goods are to be put, and leave only the belligerent answerable for his hostile intent. It is argued that the Americans, under their own act, established a convenient precedent in the case of the Santissima Trinidad. This vessel was first built at Baltimore as a privateer against England, when England and America were at war. In eighteen 'sixteen she was owned by American citizens, who sent her from Baltimore, with a cargo of munitions of war and twelve guns, ostensibly to the north-west coast, but really to help Buenos Ayres, then in revolt against Spain. Arrived at Buenos Ayres, she was sold nominally to the captain who took her out, who thereafter commanded her as a ship of war belonging to the government of Buenos Ayres, of which republic this commander—Captain Chayter—announced to the crew that he had become a citizen. Here there was a ship of war carrying from an American port guns, munitions of war, an American captain and a crew prepared to become themselves implements of war in the service of a foreign people in conflict with a state at peace with the American government. But the judgment of the American Supreme Court, as delivered by Mr. Justice Story, was, that "although equipped as a vessel of war, the Santissima Trinidad was sent to Buenos Ayres on a commercial adventure. . . . If captured by a Spanish ship of war during the voyage she would have been justly condemned as a good prize for being engaged in a traffic punishable by the law of nations. But there is nothing in our laws, or in the law of nations, which forbids our citizens from sending armed vessels, as well as munitions of war, to foreign ports for sale."

Again, there was a yet more explicit American decision in the case of the Bolivar, which, in the year 'thirty-two, left Baltimore for the island of St. Thomas, the owner and equipper averring that he left Baltimore to look for funds to arm and equip her for a privateering cruise.

"The law," said this decision, "does not prohibit armed vessels belonging to citizens of the United States from sailing out of our ports; it only requires owners to give security (as was done in the present case) that such vessels shall not be employed *by them* to commit hostilities against foreign powers at peace with the United States. The collectors are not authorised to detain vessels, although manifestly built for warlike purposes, and about to depart from the United States, unless circumstances shall render it probable that such vessels are intended to be employed *by the owners* to commit hostilities against some foreign power at peace with the United States. All the latitude, therefore, necessary for commercial purposes is given to our citizens, and they are restrained only from such acts as are calculated to involve the country in war." This is all in direct defiance to the spirit of the law, but the way to such interpretation of its letter, say the English builders of the Alabama and the Alexandra, was shown to them in America. They only followed it.

The Alabama was built by the Messrs. Laird, of Birkenhead, under the name of No. 290, for use as a Confederate vessel of war, and cost, including provisions enough for a four months' voyage, in U. S. money, two hundred and fifty-five thousand dollars. She is a barque-rigged wooden propeller of rather more than a thousand tons register, about two hundred and twenty feet long, and seventeen deep, with two horizontal engines of three hundred horse-power, and stowage for three hundred and fifty tons of coal. The main-deck is pierced for twelve guns, and the berth-deck able to accommodate a hundred and twenty men. Intelligence having been received that on a certain morning the custom-house officers would be prepared to board and detain this vessel under the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act, on the same morning, the twenty-ninth of July, eighteen 'sixty-two, before the custom-house officers were ready for their seizure, the vessel, starting three or four days before its appointed time, steamed out with some half-dozen ladies on board, including two daughters of the builder, and some gentlemen of Liverpool, who were taken as a blind, ostensibly upon a trial trip. But in Moelfra Bay the holiday party was transferred to a steam-tug, and there the vessel remained shipping hands as bound to Nassau of the Bahamas. No guns had been placed on board at Liverpool. The new war steamer went first to the island of Terceira, in the Azores, where she awaited the arrival of her armament. First came the Agrippina of London, with four thirty-two pounder broadside guns, and two pivot guns, a sixty-eight pounder solid-shot gun, and a hundred-pounder rifle gun, besides gunpowder, Enfield rifles, two cases of pistols, shot, shell, and other

munitions of war, coal, and all the clothing for the men. While these were being transferred, there arrived also the screw steamer Bahama, with more stores, two thirty-two pounders, all the guns being furnished by Fawcett, Preston, and Co., of Liverpool, and a fire-proof chest containing fifty thousand dollars in English sovereigns, and the same amount in bank bills; having on board also the future officers of the newly-built privateer, Commander Raphael Semmes and officers of the Confederate steamer Sumter. On Sunday, the twenty-fourth of August, 'sixty-two, Captain Semmes formally took command of the Confederate States steamer Alabama, eight guns. John Latham, who was among the crew of the Bahama who signed articles to serve as a fireman on board the Alabama, and who being afterwards dismissed from the ship made depositions at Liverpool to the United States consul, of which copies were forwarded to the British government, thus describes the manner of the start:

"On Sunday, the 24th of August, Captain Semmes came on board the Bahama, and called us under the bridge, he himself and the officers standing on the bridge; he addressed us and said:

"'Now, my lads, there is the ship (pointing to the Alabama); 'she is as fine a vessel as ever floated; there is a chance which seldom offers itself to a British seaman, that is, to make a little money. I am not going to put you alongside of a frigate at first; but after I have got you drilled a little, I will give you a nice little fight.' He said, 'There are only six ships that I am afraid of in the United States navy.' He said, 'We are going to burn, sink, and destroy the commerce of the United States; your prize-money will be divided proportionately according to each man's rank, something similar to the English navy.' Some of the men objected, being Naval Reserve men. Captain Semmes said, 'Never mind that, I will make that all right; I will put you in English ports where you can get your book signed every three months.' He then said, 'There is Mr. Kell on the deck, and all those who are desirous of going with me let them go aft, and give Mr. Kell their names.' A great many went aft, but some refused. A boat came from the Alabama, and those who had agreed to go went on board. Captain Semmes and the officers went on board. Mr. Low, the fourth lieutenant, then appeared in uniform, and he came on board the Bahama, endeavouring to induce the men to come forward and join, and he succeeded in getting the best part of us. I was one who went at the last minute. When I got on board the Alabama, I found a great number of men that had gone on board of her from Liverpool. Captain Semmes then addressed us on board the Alabama, and Captain Butcher was there also, who had taken the vessel out. Captain Semmes said he hoped we all should content ourselves and be comfortable one amongst another; but any of you that thinks he cannot stand to his gun I don't want. He then called the purser, and such as agreed to serve signed articles on the companion-hatch, and on signing, the men received either two months' pay in advance, or one month's wages and a half-pay note."

According to this man's list, while the chief officers of the Alabama were transatlantic, only four or five chief petty officers and one seaman of the sixty-six men forming the petty officers and seamen of the crew were from the Confederate States, forty-six being English, and ten Scotch, Irish, or Welshmen, besides here and there a German or a Portuguese.

The Alabama was one of two privateer vessels built in England at the same time and at the cost of the Confederate government, by order of the same agent, Captain Bullock. The other privateer, the Oreto, afterwards called the Florida, also contrived to elude Custom House seizure.

Of life on board the Alabama we have a lively sketch in a pamphlet published at Liverpool, describing, through the brief and business-like journal of an officer on board—the acting master's mate—The Cruise of the Alabama, from her Departure from Liverpool until her Arrival at the Cape of Good Hope.

On the day following that Sunday, the twenty-fourth of August, 'sixty-two, on which Captain Semmes took formal command of the ship, the cruise was begun. Brigs, barques, and brigantines were chased, and one was boarded, but they showed French or Portuguese colours, and the first prize was not taken until the fifth of September, when a ship showing American colours was boarded, and proved to be the Ochmulgee, whaler, of Martha's Vineyard, with a valuable sperm whale fast alongside. Possession was taken of her, her crew and all desirable stores being transferred to the Alabama. Only the American-born prisoners were ironed. Next day this prize was burnt, and the schooner Starlight, of Boston, with passengers from Fayal to Flores was chased and captured. On the next day but one the passengers and crew of the captured schooner were landed at Flores from the Alabama, and on that day chase was given to the barque Ocean Rover, of New London, with a valuable cargo of whale oil on board. Prisoners and stores having been transhipped, the Rover was scuttled, but her buoyant cargo kept her above water. Next day the barque Alert, of New Bedford, was found not alert enough to escape capture, and a bonfire was made of the Alert, and of the Ocean Rover, and of the schooner Starlight. On the same day there was another schooner taken, English colours having, in each case of capture, been shown by the Alabama till the boarding officer was on the lost vessel's deck.

Having landed prisoners at Flores, and received a visit from the governor, the Alabama sailed again, captured, on the 13th, an American brigantine, the Altamaha, of Sippican, and on the day following the whaling ship Benjamin Tucker, of New Bedford. The journalist, who was on this occasion boarding officer, describes here the Alabama's usual way of pouncing as sea-hawk on the sea-pigeons.

"14th, 1.30 A.M. Gave chase to a sail on lee-bow. 2.30 A.M., fired a gun for her to heave to. Darkness prevented us knowing who she was, so I went on board to examine her papers, and which, if Yankee, I was to signal it and heave to until daylight. What I did on boarding this vessel was the course usually adopted in taking prizes. Pulling under his stern I saw it was the whaling ship Benjamin Tucker, of and from New Bedford. Gaining the quarter-deck, I was welcomed with outstretched hands. In answer to my questions, the captain told me her name, port of registry, &c. &c., of all which I was previously aware. I then told him that he was a prize to the Confederate States steamer Alabama, ordering him to put his clothes in one trunk, allowing the mates and men one bag each—all navigation books and instruments being left behind. At daylight sent the captain and crew with the ship's papers and luggage to the Alabama. I then examined the ship, and finding some cases of stores, they were transferred to our ship. The preparations to fire her were soon made, so that after seeing her well fired we pushed off and regained our vessel, the prisoners (Yankees) being placed in single irons."

Two days afterwards, a schooner having been captured, the crew was taken out and put on shore, when, says the Alabama's acting master's mate, "we stood out to sea and made a target of prize. After some creditable shooting we burnt her." Next day an American whaler was taken and burnt. Next day a barque from New Bedford was taken and burnt; so that nine vessels were captured and burnt by the Alabama in the first month of her cruising.

On the third of October capture was made of the ship Brilliant, of New York, on her way to Liverpool, with a cargo of grain and flour. Capture had already been made on the same morning of an American vessel, the Emily Farnum, with a cargo found to be neutral. All prisoners were, therefore, put on board the Emily Farnum, and she was sent on her voyage to Liverpool. But the Brilliant, with all the corn in her, was burnt. "It seemed," said the diarist, "a fearful thing to burn such a cargo as the Brilliant had, when I thought how the operatives in the cotton districts would have danced with joy had they it shared amongst them." And then he adds: "This evening, quite unexpectedly, we were called to general quarters, going through all the evolutions in quite a masterly manner. Sounded fire-alarm, manned pumps as for a leak, called away boarders, and went through everything expected to be done in action. After this, every Friday evening, when practicable, was set apart for general quarters." Three days later, another vessel, with a large cargo of grain and flour, The Wave Crest, of New York, bound to Cardiff, was captured. Her captain asserted that the cargo was English, but as he had no papers to prove it she was made a prize. Crew having been transferred, all hands were called to quarter, and there were two rounds of shell-firing at the prize before she was burnt. On the same day, before midnight, an American brigantine, the Dunkirk, also flour laden, was added to the number of the victims, and among the crew of the Dunkirk was taken one George Forrest, who was recognised by a seaman on board the Alabama as a deserter from the Confederate States steamer Sumter. Two days afterwards, a grain-laden Philadelphia ship, the Tonawanda, was captured, and a court-martial was held on George Forrest, the sentence being 'that all pay, prize-money, &c., due to him be forfeited; that he fulfil his term of service, and forfeit all pay, excepting such as is sufficient to provide necessary clothing and liberty money.'" Of this man, the officer's diary records that, about a month later, he slipped down a cable, swam to a boat, and returned on board with a great quantity of spirits, "and handed it round to the crew, and all unknown to a single officer, he not tasting a drop himself—thus showing that his aim was to cause a mutiny on board. Those of the men that were inflated, or rather infuriated, with liquor, were placed in double irons, with a few exceptions; these, in addition to irons, were gagged, and bucket after bucket of water thrown over them, until they became partially sober. A short time previously one man had been stabbed severely in the arm. The officers and some of the petty officers were fully armed—the captain having given orders to that effect, and to cut down the first man that hesitated to obey an order. The scoundrel Forrest was triced up in the mizen rigging two hours on and two off."

A week after this, "on the twenty-sixth of November," the officer's diary records: "All hands aft to muster. Sentence of general court-martial read to prisoner." The sentence was, that George Forrest, A.B., forfeit all pay, prize-money, &c., due to him; that all wearing apparel (except what belonged to him when previously captured) be taken from him, and that he be ignominiously dismissed the ship and service, placed in the hands of the master of arms, and put on shore at the island of Blanquilla. To the account thus given by an officer of the Alabama, we shall add the version of the same incident as given by the ex-fireman, John Latham, in his information against the vessel on which he had served:

"There was a man of the name of George Forrest, who one of the midshipmen recognised as having been a seaman on board the Sumter, and had deserted. He was brought on board to Captain Semmes, who told him that if he behaved well he should have his pay and prize-money as the other men, but that he had a right to detain him throughout the war without paying him a cent. Forrest was retained on board the Alabama, was frequently punished by having his hands and legs fastened to the rigging, the punishment being known as the 'spread eagle,' and he would be kept in this position for four hours at a time, and this was done at least twenty times, and at last they ironed his legs and arms, and sent him on shore on a desolate island called Blanquilla, some two hundred

miles from the mainland, and left him. The crew subscribed some seventeen pounds, unknown to Captain Semmes, which we gave him, in the hope of its being some inducement to a vessel to take him off."

Blanquilla is a little barren island in the Caribbean Sea, much visited by turtles, and inhabited by three men who keep goats and go fishing. It has also a harbour visited by ships.

How the Alabama took and destroyed the Manchester, laden with wheat and cotton, from New York; how she took eighty thousand dollars ransom for the Tonawanda, which had seventy-five passengers on board, who, says the diarist officer, "testified in rather a ludicrous manner (to me) their joy at their deliverance;" how the good ship rode out a squall; how she captured the Lafayette, grain laden; for the captain, although he, too, said that his cargo was English, had no papers to prove it; how the prisoners, who had been living under a tent rigged for them on the maindeck, were, in consideration of cold weather, put below in the forward fire-room, it being vacated for that purpose, and the fires kindled in the after one instead; how it angered the men of the Alabama to read in the American papers, taken from the Lafayette, that they treated their prisoners worse than dogs; how, presently afterwards, more papers were taken from another prize, a schooner from New York, on her way, grain laden, to Glasgow, and when "we read the infamous assertions made by the captain of the Brilliant with respect to our treatment of prisoners, a conviction was forced upon every mind that kindness extended to them was completely thrown away;" how, two days afterwards, an American barque was taken, and two days after that the brigantine Baron de Custine, which was ransomed on condition that she took charge of and landed all the Alabama's prisoners; how also the Alabama took and burnt several more vessels, we read in the officer's journal of the cruise, until the anchorage of the privateer in the harbour of Port Royal, Martinique, when its officers and crew had a most cordial reception from the inhabitants, both civil and military. There the United States war steamer San Jacinto, fourteen guns, was on the look-out for the audacious rebels. Her commander was warned by the governor at Port Royal that the San Jacinto must either come in and anchor, in which case she was bound to remain till twenty-four hours after the Alabama had left, or she must remain on the watch three miles out at sea. He chose the latter course. The Alabama slipped out unobserved, and the San Jacinto continued her blockade during the next four days after the Alabama had departed. Having met at Blanquilla the vessel that brought her a fresh supply of coals, the Alabama set to work again, and, omitting note of small captures, her next notable prize was made on the 7th of December, in the United States mail steamer Ariel, running from New York to Aspinwall.

"The steamer turned and made for off. The order was then given to train and fire the pivot guns at her; a second order was given to fire at her smoke-stack. In the position she then was, her foremast was in a line with the smoke-stack. Both guns were then fired, one shot of which struck the foremast about ten feet from the deck, taking away two-thirds of it, the stick still standing; fortunately, they did not explode at the time, else the carnage amongst the passengers would have been frightful. She then hove to. A boat was sent on board, and the captain brought on board us with his papers. Three boxes of specie, a twenty-four pound rifled gun, one hundred and twenty-five new rifles, sixteen swords, and about one thousand rounds of ammunition, were quickly transferred to our vessel, there being on board one hundred and forty officers and men (marines) going out to join the United States Pacific squadron, and about five hundred passengers, men, women, and children, several naval and military officers being also on board. The military were paroled. On boarding, the marines were found drawn up in fighting order. From the captain of the steamer I learnt that the marine officers first advised the surrender of the vessel. The Yankees said that they had not the remotest idea we should dare show ourselves in that part of the world."

As there were women and children among the passengers, it was resolved to land them at Jamaica, but from a vessel afterwards boarded, it was learnt that yellow fever had broken out at Jamaica, so it was determined to ransom the Ariel and let her go. Just at that time an accident had happened to the machinery of the Alabama, but the crippled state of the captor was carefully kept secret, and afterwards the engineers worked night and day at the repairs.

The next event of note in the story of the Alabama's cruise was her fight on Sunday, the eleventh of January, 'sixty-three, with the Federal gunboat Hatteras, carrying nine guns. This was one of seven war vessels sent to recapture Galveston, and her battle at sea with the Alabama, twenty-eight miles from Galveston, was, between two steamers out at sea, the first yard-arm action of the civil war. Says the diarist:

"At 6.30, the strange steamer hailed and asked, 'What steamer is that?' We replied (in order to be certain who he was) 'Her Majesty's steamer Petrel!' 'What steamer is that?' Two or three times we asked the question, until we heard, 'This is the United States steamer ——,' not hearing the name. However, United States was sufficient. As no doubt existed as to her character, we said, at 6.35, that this was the 'Confederate States steamer Alabama,' accompanying the last syllable of our name with a shell fired over him. The signal being given, the other guns took up the refrain, and a tremendous volley from our whole broadside given to him, every shell striking her side, the shot striking being distinctly heard on board our vessel, and thus found that she was iron.

"The enemy replied, and the action became

general. A most sharp, spirited firing was kept up on both sides, our fellows peppering away as though the action depended upon each individual. And so it did. Pistols and rifles were continually pouring from our quarter-deck messengers most deadly, the distance, during the hottest of the fight, not being more than forty yards! It was a grand, though fearful sight to see the guns belching forth in the darkness of the night sheets of living flame, the deadly missiles striking the enemy with a force that we could *feel*. Then, when the shells struck her side, and especially the percussion ones, her whole side was lit up, showing rents of five or six feet in length. One shot had just struck our smoke-stack, and wounded one man in the cheek, when the enemy ceased his firing, and fired a lee gun; then a second, and a third. The order was then given to 'Cease firing.' This was at 6.52. A tremendous cheering commenced, and it was not until everybody had cleared his throat to his own satisfaction that silence could be obtained. We then hailed her, and in reply he stated that he had surrendered, was on fire, and also that he was in a sinking condition. He then sent a boat on board, and surrendered the United States gunboat Hatteras, nine guns, Lieut.-Commander Blake, one hundred and forty men. Boats were immediately lowered, and sent to her assistance, when an alarm was given that another steamer was bearing down for us. The boats were recalled and hoisted up, when it was found to be a false alarm. The order was then given, and the boatswain and his mates piped 'All hands out boats to save life,' and soon the prisoners were transferred to our ship—the officers under guard on the quarter-deck and the men in single irons. The boats were then hoisted up, the battery run in and secured, and the main-brace spliced. All hands piped down, the enemy's vessel sunk, and we steamed quietly away by 8.30, all having been done in less than two hours."

On the twenty-first of January the Alabama paroled and landed at Jamaica her prisoners from the Hatteras, coaled, suffered some inconvenience from dissatisfaction in the crew. Seven deserted, and, says the diarist, "circumstances of a painful nature compelled our commander, though reluctantly, to dismiss the paymaster from the ship and service. After depriving him of his sword, &c., he was sent from the vessel on shore. The alternative of remaining on board, confined to his room, until the ship reached a Confederate port, was left him." This is the paymaster, Clarence Randolph Yonge, who says in his depositions, "My connexion with the ship terminated in Port Royal, and I subsequently came to England," when he made to the Federal authorities those depositions against the Alabama from which we have already quoted.

Coaled and provisioned, the Alabama ran out, again eluding Federal look-outs. A prize was taken on the third of February, another and another were taken on the twenty-first, one on the twenty-seventh, one on the first of March, another on the second, another on the eighth, another on the twenty-third, and two on the twenty-fifth, many vessels being, of course, chased and boarded found other than American, and left to go their way, vessels with neutral cargoes being ransomed, and having the Alabama's paroled prisoners transferred to them, other vessels being destroyed, and the Alabama generally, when not engaged in making capture, describing herself as the United States steamer Dacotah. On the tenth of April she arrived at Fernando de Moronha (a Brazilian penal settlement, where there is plenty of live stock and good water) with a prize in tow, both vessels flying the Confederate flag. Having coaled there, she again proceeded on her way, captured and destroyed a brigantine and a barque, American whalers, on the fifteenth, and sent the prisoners on shore to the number of one hundred and forty, with twenty-one days' provisions. On the twenty-fourth capture was made of another whaler; on the twenty-sixth a ship from New York was taken and burnt; the captain, who had his wife with him, being as usual accommodated in the ward-room. On the third of May two more vessels were taken and destroyed; of one of them the captain had with him his wife, servant, and two children, and as passengers a United States consul for Che-Foo, who was taking out his wife.

On the eleventh of May the Alabama anchored in Bahia harbour, her appearance there causing the most intense excitement. The U.S. consul demanded her detention; she obtained reluctant leave to land prisoners and get supplies; received visitors innumerable, and sent out, by the English mail-boat, a challenge to the U.S. steamer Mohican to stop her and fight her. The Confederate steamer Georgia, five guns, Commander Maury, entered the harbour while the Alabama was yet there. But the departure of the Alabama being ordered by the shore authorities when she had finished coaling, she got under weigh on the twenty-first of May, and four days later captured an American ship laden with coal.

Another capture was made on the twenty-ninth, another on the second of June, another on the fifth, of the Talisman, which contained two brass rifled twelve-pounders. There was no other capture made till that of barque Conrad, on the twentieth. Next day the two brass guns of the Talisman were put on board the Conrad with a quantity of small-arms, coal, provisions, and a Confederate crew, upon which she hoisted the Confederate flag, fired a gun, and was declared commissioned as the Confederate States barque Tuscaloosa, Lieutenant-commanding Low, late junior lieutenant of the Alabama. And so the parent cruiser and her offspring parted company. After having taken only one prize in July, and anchored at Saldanha Bay early in August, the Alabama chased a sail, and found it to be her new-born Tuscaloosa. They compared notes, parted again, and having made a capture almost immediately afterwards, the Alabama came to anchor and banked fires

in Table Bay. From that time until the sixteenth of September last year, when the journal ends, the Alabama was cruising in those seas as a Confederate spider on the watch for American flies that passed the Cape. Seizure was made at the Cape of the Tuscaloosa, but as she had been fitted out on the high seas, certainly beyond British jurisdiction, the English government could have no power to detain her, and she was released.

Here, certainly, is record enough of the powers of mischief in a single privateer. But the English government has shown its desire to test the utmost powers of the Foreign Enlistment Act, and to enforce them all. It sought to bring the letter of the law into acknowledged accord with its spirit by the prosecution following the seizure of the Alexandra. But at the trial the Lord Chief Baron followed in his summing up the American precedents already referred to. He ruled to the jury: "If you think that the object really was to build a ship in obedience to an order, in compliance with a contract, leaving those who bought it to make what use of it they thought fit, it appears to me that the Foreign Enlistment Act has not been broken. But if you think that the object was to furnish, fit out, equip, and arm that vessel at Liverpool, that is a different matter." And the jury found that there was no breach of the law. The motion for a new trial failed narrowly as everybody knows, but the crown has yet a right of appeal.

The English government has also another trial of this issue pending in the prosecution that is yet to follow seizure of the steam-rams built in the yard of Messrs. Laird Brothers of Birkenhead, professedly upon the order of M. Bravay, a merchant of Paris, given on behalf of the Pasha of Egypt, the rams being named, in accordance with this statement, El Tousson and El Monassia. The Federal government believing these rams to be destined for the use of the Confederates, made, on the eleventh of last July, strong representations to the English government upon the subject. The English government required evidence, and on the first of September last it was still debarred from action beyond active inquiry, and, in the mean time, friendly effort to secure the rams by itself becoming their purchaser. For, until then, there was no evidence beyond hearsay to show that the rams were not being really built for a French merchant in Paris, and the responsible agent of the customs at Liverpool affirmed his belief that the vessels were not built for the Confederate States. But between the first and the fourth of September evidence yet undisclosed came into possession of the government, and after that date orders were given to detain the rams. The Egyptian government had declared that it was not, as alleged, their purchaser; and since their seizure the Confederate government, in the report of the secretary to the Confederate navy, has acknowledged that they are, in fact, two of eight iron-clad rams, designed expressly to break the blockade of such ports as were not blockaded with the iron-clad Monitors of the enemy, of which rams five were contracted for in England and three in France. "Due precautions," says the Confederate navy report, "were taken against contravening the laws of England in the construction and equipment of these vessels. Three have been completed; but owing to the unfriendly construction of her neutrality laws, the government of England stationed several war vessels at the mouth of the Mersey, and prevented their departure from England. Subsequently they were seized by the British government."

Practically, then, there is no doubt as to the purpose for which these seized vessels were built. But the extent to which it is possible to enforce legally the intentions of the Foreign Enlistment Act will have again to be tested in the case of these two rams. If the issue of the trial be assurance that the terms of the act as it now stands are insufficient, and that it can lawfully be evaded, to all practical purposes, in every particular, the bringing in of an amended act will be the next thing we must look for.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XII.—THE WILD ANIMAL.

MONSIEUR CONSTANT, giving one low but authoritative tap at the door of the front drawing-room, turned the handle and found himself in a moment in the presence of the "wild animal."

She was not lying on straw. There were no bars before her. She was not grovelling à quatre pattes. The wild animal was merely a very beautiful young woman in a black satin dress and with a great diamond necklace round her neck, and great diamond bracelets on her arms. Neck and arms were bare.

"I put on these for him. I dressed for supper," she cried in a fury, so soon as she saw the valet, "and the traitor sends me word that he cannot come! Sends me word by a vile little jockey—a lacquey. He has the soul of one," she continued, paraphrasing, perhaps unconsciously, Ruy Blas. "I will poison him. I will trample upon him. My next guest shall be that brute of a German ambassador, who eats onions and drinks stout."

The countess was a Frenchwoman, pur sang.

"Tut, tut, tut," quoth Monsieur Constant, in French. "What a disturbance you raise, to be sure. You should have devoted yourself to melodrama, madame, and not to the manège. What a pity that you should now have nothing better to say in public than 'Haoup! hup là!' and that to a horse too!"

"Coquin!" screamed the lady. "Are you come to insult me?"

"Do you want to wake Mademoiselle Rataplan, who sleeps the sleep of the just? *She* does not ask milords to sup with her. Nor would you—were you wise—the wife of an English gentleman, un fashionable, un lion, quoi!"

A deep crimson veil—a blush, not of shame, but of rage—fell, like a gauze in a scene in a spectacle, over the woman's white neck and arms. She set her teeth for a moment and ground them, and then, starting up, began with the passionate volubility of her nation:

"The wife of an English gentleman! The wife of a swindler, un escroc! a gambler, a rascal! He was to have millions, forsooth. I was to have a carriage. I was to have horses, parks, châteaux."

"Well; you have four horses as it is."

"Yes. My beautiful husband allows me to become a horse-rider in a circus. I am the Honourable Lady Blunt."

"Not a bit of it. Your husband is not in the least a titled personage. He is an English gentleman, nothing more."

"He is a swindler, a gambler, a rascal!" the lady repeated, with concentrated bitterness. "Enfin, I am the wedded wife of Monsieur François Blunt. Monsieur je suis votre très devouée! Oh! he is an angel, my husband!"

"Mon père m'a donné pour mari,
Mon dieu, quel homme, quel homme petit."

Thus softly whistled between his teeth Monsieur Constant.

"Say, rather, un homme lâche—a prodigy of baseness. He married me by subterfuge and fraud."

"He did," Constant echoed, agreeing with the wild animal for once; "subterfuge and fraud are the words. Après."

"His millions turned out to be all in protested bills, long overdue, and for which he was responsible. He was criblé de dettes. He made me dance and sing at his infamous supper parties for the amusement of his vagabond aristocrat friends. It was I who paid the champagne à ces beaux festins. Monsieur was not too proud to draw my salary month after month. Monsieur was unfaithful to me."

"Vous lui avez donné la réplique, ma belle."

"He insulted me, neglected me," the lady went on, seeming not to have heard the valet's scornful remark. "He beat me. Beat ME, on whom no parent or governess ever dared to lay a finger."

"Don't you remember the Beugleuse. You tried to strangle Blunt twice, to stab him once. You would have put something in his coffee had you dared."

"Only when the marks of his hands were on my face. There are women who like to be beaten. He should have married one of them. I tell you he is un lâche."

"I know it was not a happy ménage. Love flew out of the window soon after the honeymoon, and the furniture flew after it. You used to smash a great deal of crockery-ware between you. Well; you would have your own way. It has brought you to the Hôtel Rataplan."

"He deprived me of my child—of my little Lilé," the lady went on, after a few moments' silence, during which her bosom heaved, and she panted: as though want of breath, and not want of grievances, compelled her to a temporary surcease in invective.

"No," cried Constant, quietly. "You have nothing to accuse him of, with respect to the child. *He* didn't deprive you of it. *I* did."

"Monster!" cried the lady. Her looks, however, did not bear out the acerbity of her speech.

"Benefactor rather. I did not choose to have the little one continue in the inferno its papa and mamma were making round it. If Blunt had been left alone with it, he is so lazy, insouciant—thoroughly and incurably heartless, if you will—that he would have left it in the street, or sent it to the workhouse. Had it been confided to you, it would have had its brains dashed out in one of your mad rages; or else it would have been educated for the pad-saddle and the circus. One Amazon in a family is quite enough, countess."

He gave her the name bestowed upon her, half in envy, half in mockery, by her comrades of the theatre: whom she offended by her haughtiness, and terrified by her temper.

"Bon; and the child, where is it?"

"Safe and sound, at school. When she is old enough, she shall be a nun, and pray for her wicked papa and mamma."

"It is the child of Francis Blunt, and that is enough to make me hate it," said the woman.

"A pretty speech for a mother. Nature, you are a potent influence! To be sure, you have scarcely ever seen the poor little thing. It was ample time, however, to deprive you of it. Since the morrow of her christening you have never set eyes upon her. I will take care you never do again, if I can help it. Your tenderness is of a dangerous nature. When Heaven gave you that beautiful form, and that brilliant intellect, how was it that so trifling a matter, such a mere bagatelle, as a heart, was left out, madame?"

As he spoke, he raised his flaccid lids and gazed upon her with gloomy intensity. She tossed her head scornfully, and adjusted the glittering trinkets on her arms.

"Do you wish to revive the old story?" she asked. "I thought that in our treaty of amity and alliance, offensive and defensive, there was a secret article to the effect that nothing ever was to be said about the days when we were young and foolish."

"When *I* was young, and a fool, a madman," the valet retorted. "I am growing old, now. You are still young, but foolish no more. You never were. Oh no! You were always wonderfully wise!"

"As you please," the wild animal, who had become strangely tranquil, perchance through sheer lassitude, uttered. "I must beg you, however, not to bore me with these old histories of Colin and Jacqueline. They are all very well in pastel, or in porcelaine de Saxe, but they bore me in prose. What do you want here, so late at night?"

"We are both night-birds. My visit in the end will be a welcome one. I have brought you a hundred pounds from your husband."

"Donnez!" said the lady, coolly, and held out her hand.

"Not so fast. I know your capacity for absorbing money. Certain conditions, and not very hard ones, are attached to this advance. We, that is monsieur," he was respectful to the dandy even in his absence, "must not be annoyed for six months."

"And you offer a miserable hundred pounds? C'est peu."

"It is all we can give. Business has not been prosperous. Times are very hard with us; and even this hundred pounds can be ill spared."

"I dare say. Times also are very hard with me. But tell me, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, has my precious husband any funds of his own?"

"Not a sou. He ate up his patrimony years ago."

"Have you?"

Constant shrugged his shoulders. "What can a poor domestique at wages be worth?" he replied.

"Then it is stolen money. You have stolen this hundred pounds. Keep it. I will not have it."

"Hypocrite! Your mouth is watering for it, and you only wish that it were ten times as much. No, madame, it is not money stolen; it is money won."

"By cheating?"

"As you please. I have it here, in five-pound notes."

"Give it me, then. I don't think my husband has yet devoted himself to forgery. He has not application enough. You may tell him from me that I shall not trouble him again for six months."

"What are you going to do with your milord?" the valet asked, with a darkling look.

"C'est mon affaire. But if you must know what I mean to do with milord, then by Debonnair it is to bleed him for the good of his constitution. Il a trop de sang, ce moutard-là."

"He is not of age."

"The usurers are kind to him."

"You do not love him?"

"Did I ever love anybody, Jean Baptiste Constant? It is growing very late. I think you had better give me the money and let me go to bed."

He handed her a packet of notes.

"Thank you. It is not much, though."

"Good night, Valérie."

"Hun?" quoth the wild animal, with a look of simulated surprise, but profound disdain. "Since when, Monsieur who brushes my husband's clothes?"

"Good night, Mrs. Blunt, then."

"The Honourable Lady Blunt, you mean!" but this last she said in mockery, "Be sure you give my love to my husband."

"I will give him as much love as you send him; and shall not waste much breath. Again good night."

"Good night, my bear."

He had never taken a seat during the interview, but had half stood, half lounged, against the console on which he had placed his hat. Without directing another glance towards her, he left the room. His face had turned white, and he was trembling all over. But he had great command over his emotions, and by the time he reached the salle à manger his countenance was as unruffled as ever.

Rataplan had gone to bed. Constant, however, was an old habitué of the house, and made himself comfortable with the female night-porter, La Mère Thomas. He was no smoker; but she brewed him some mulled claret, of which he partook in moderation. And so remained, after a game or two at dominoes, with the mahogany-coloured sentinel, until past four in the morning. His conversation was mainly about the "countess" and her temper.

CHAPTER XIII. TO GAMRIDGE'S.

GAMRIDGE'S Hotel was in Pump-street, Regent-street. Gamridge's was much frequented by the junior members of the aristocracy, and by officers bearing his Majesty's commission. Gamridge's was the legitimate and lineal successor of the old Slaughter's Coffee-house in St. Martin's lane, of whose ancient waiter and young military frequenters Thackeray's Vanity Fair discourses delightfully. Gamridge's, in 1836, was at the apogee of its popularity and renown; but, a few years afterwards—such is the mutability of human affairs—Gamridge's was destined to be eclipsed by the Rag and Famish.

Why "Rag" and why "Famish"? I, as a poor slouching civilian, am not, I hope, bound to know. The Rag and Famish seems to me a most palatial edifice, superb in all its exterior appointments. I have heard that its inner chambers are decorated in the most lavish style of Oriental splendour; that its smoking-room vies in gorgeousness with the Court of the Lions at the Alhambra; that, in its drawing-rooms, the genius of the most eminent upholsterers in London has run riot. Nobody can be in rags, nobody can possibly be famished, at the R. and F. The cuisine, I have heard, is exquisite, the wines and liquors are beyond compare. The lightest-vested and brightest-buttoned foot-pages in the parish of St. James's gambol and grin behind the plate-glass doors. The most majestic and the longest-moustached military bricks puff their cigars on the steps. There are always half a dozen Hansoms in waiting before the portal. On the Derby Day, drags by the score start from the Rag. The prizes in the race sweeps at the Rag are said to be enormous.

Let me see, what is the pay of a subaltern in the Line? Some seventy or eighty pounds a year, I believe. What is the half-pay of a general officer? Not many hundreds per annum, I am afraid. It strikes me that the establishment, not only of the Rag, but of the Senior and Junior United Service Clubs, must have been an inestimable boon to the young warriors who are ready to fight their country's battles, and to the old braves who have fought them, and retired to grass, and whose helmets are now hives for bees. To live like a fighting-cock, and to be housed like a prince; to have all the newspapers and periodicals, and a first-rate library; billiard and smoking rooms, baths and lavatories, lounging and elbow-resting room; a numerous staff of silent, civil, and deferential servants in imposing liveries, and as much stationery as ever you want; these are joys familiar to the members of the Rag, and of other cognate mansions. The young fellow on active service can run up from Chatham or Aldershot, and have the free range of a Venetian palace till his leave is out. The battered half-pay has but to provide himself with a bedroom at half a guinea a week in Jermyn-street, or St. Alban's-place, and, from nine of the clock on one morning till two or three of the clock on the next, he may live as luxuriously as a Sultan of Cathay. The annual subscription is moderate. The table-money is inconsiderable. Beer, bread, and pickles are dispensed gratuitously. The cigars are foreign. The provisions and wines are supplied at rates very little exceeding cost price.

Whereas, I can't see what a civilian wants with a club at all. He has a home, which the soldier and sailor, as a rule, have not. He has a cook at home. He may refect himself in a decorous dining-room at home. If he wants books, let him subscribe to the London Library, or ask Mr. Panizzi for a ticket for the Museum Reading-room. He needs no smoking-room. Civilians have no right to smoke. He needs no billiard-room. Civilians should be men of business, and men of business have no right to play billiards. "Clubs," says Solomon Buck, in one of his wisest apophthegms, "are weapons of offence, wielded by savages for the purpose of keeping off the white women." S. B. is right. Clubs, for your dashing, rollicking, harum-scarum soldiers and sailors, are all very well. The gallant fellows need a little relaxation after the irksome restraints of barracks or ship-board; but clubs, to the unworthy civilian class, are merely the meanest pretexts for selfishness and self-indulgence.

Having, I flatter myself, in the preceding paragraph, set myself right with the ladies (whom I am always trying to conciliate, and always unsuccessfully), I will proceed to the consideration of Gamridge's. Social clubs of the palatial order were rare in 1836. St. James's had its exclusive political reunions—White's, Brooks's, Boodle's, and the like; but none save the elect of the elect could obtain admission to them. Crockford's was very fashionable, but it was a gaming-house. The Carlton wasn't built. The Athenæum and the Reform were arrogant with the flush of the March of Intellect, and looked down upon the men of the sword. The members of the now

defunct Alfred were quarrelling among themselves. The United Service only admitted officers of high grade. What remained, then, for the young or middle-aged warriors but Gamridge's?

Gamridge's was not a club; its coffee-room was open to all comers; yet the character of its frequenters was so strongly marked, that an outsider rarely, if ever, ventured to set foot within the mysterious precincts. A bagman who presumed to enter Gamridge's would have had a bad time of it. There would have been wailing in Lancashire, if a Manchester man had so far forgotten himself as to intrude, uninvited, on the Gamridgean exclusiveness. In its distinctive typification, and its invisible but impassable barriers, Gamridge's resembled one of the old coffee-houses of the preceding century. They, too, were open to all; yet you seldom found any but merchants at Garraway's or Jonathan's, soldiers at the Crown in Whitehall, gamesters at Sam's in St. James's-street, country squires at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, Jacobites at the Harp at Cornhill, booksellers' hacks at the Devil in Fleet-street, lawyers at the Cock, and publishers at the Ball in Long-acre.

There had never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the parish, been a Gamridge. Who he was, if ever he were at all, there is no knowing. In '36 the landlord—landlady, rather—was Mrs. Vash: a handsome portly widow, who wore bishop's sleeves, and a multitude of ribbons in her cap. She had many daughters, whom she kept scrupulously at boarding-school to preserve them from the perils of Gamridge's; for, if the "wild prince" was dead "Poins" was about, wilder than ever. Mrs. Vash was a woman of the world. A few, a very few, of her oldest customers—old gentlemen who had been so long and so consistently raking about town that they seemed, on the principle of extremes meeting, almost steady—were sometimes admitted to the luxurious privacy of Mrs. Vash's bar-parlour. She was an excellent judge of port wine, and, being a generous hostess, would occasionally treat some of her prime favourites to a bottle with a peculiar tawny seal. In the coffee-room Mrs. Vash tolerated cigars, and carefully charged ninepence apiece for them. She was equally careful to charge exorbitant prices for every article consumed. You might give a dinner now-a-days at the Rag, for what a breakfast cost at Gamridge's.

The politics of Gamridge's were High Tory in tone. The true blue patrician class had lost much power and influence by Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill, and threw themselves for a change into dissipation. Liberal Conservatives had not yet perked up into existence. Among the Whigs and Radicals it was held to be the orthodox thing, just then, to be steady and sober, to bring in moral acts of parliament, to attend lectures at the Royal Institution. The Tories sneered contemptuously at education and morality. They were staunch churchmen, but in the "flying buttress" sense, like Lord Eldon, supporting the sacred edifice from the outside. They called the London University "Stinkomalee," or the "Gower-street Pig and Whistle." They held schools where the birch was not in daily use, as the vilest hotbeds of sedition, and were careful to send their children to seminaries where they knew they would have plenty of flogging in the good old Tory style. The society at Gamridge's was a permanent protest against the Penny Magazine, and the steam engine, and the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and the educational whimsies of your Broughams, Benthams, Faradays, De Morgans, and compeers. Nothing useful, save eating and drinking, was ever attempted at Gamridge's; and even those elementary functions were performed in the manner most calculated to confer the least amount of benefit on the human frame. The guests breakfasted at three in the afternoon, and dined at midnight. Gas blazed in the coffee-room at noon, and knocked-up roués went to bed at tea-time. There were many white-faced waiters who never seemed to go to bed at all, and to like this perpetual insomnolence. Pale ale was unknown in England then, but the popping of corks from bottles of mineral waters was audible all day long. Dice, only, Mrs. Vash rigidly refused to wink at. "If gentlemen, who were gentlemen," she remarked, "wanted to call a main, they must do it in the parish of St. James's, and not in the parish of St. George's." Mrs. Vash was one of the old school, and liked to see things done in their proper places.

It was a vicious time, and yet somewhat of the patriarchal element remained. Plebeian dissipation was confined to the youngsters. The old gentlemen went to the Deuce, mounted on steady ambling cobs. A new race of rakes drove them gradually from the coffee-room at Gamridge's, and Mrs. Vash's back parlour, where they piped disparagement of the rapscallion age over their port with the tawny seal. Thence by slow degrees they subsided into Pump-street, and to Bath, and Cheltenham, and Fogeydom, and went home to bed, and fell paralytic, and so died.

Mr. Francis Blunt walked into Gamridge's at about a quarter to one in the morning, with a light tight-fitting overcoat buttoned over him, swinging his cane, and looking, on the whole, "as fresh as paint." The coarseness of the simile may find an excuse in its literal fidelity. A fresh pair of lemon-coloured kid gloves decorated his hands, the many rings bulging from beneath the soft leather. His whiskers had been rearranged—perhaps those ornaments and his hair were not strangers to a recent touch from the curling-irons, for there were hairdressers in the Quadrant who kept open till past midnight for the behoof of exquisites such as he—his clothes had been brushed, his whole exterior spruced and polished up. He had passed a hard day, but he was ready to begin a night as hard.

There was nothing particular about the exterior of Gamridge's. It was a George-the-

Second mansion of sad-coloured brick with stone dressings, and the lamp before the door was generally in a state of compound fracture from the exuberant playfulness of late-returning guests. "Lamp-glass broken, one pound five," was a common item in Mrs. Vash's long bills. When the late-returning lodgers didn't smash the lamp, they smashed the fanlight, or the soda-water tumblers, or the coffee-room panels, or the waiters' heads. They were always breaking something, and everything was charged in the bill. You entered Gamridge's by a long, low, oblique passage, seemingly specially designed for the benefit of gentlemen who came home late, overtaken with liquor, and swerved in their gait. They could not well tumble down in their progress along that sporting passage. The coffee-room was almost devoid of decoration. Had it been papered, the gentlemen would have torn the paper off; had there been a pier-glass, somebody would have smashed it, but, as pier-glasses then cost twenty pounds, the item might have been subject to inconvenient dispute in the bill. So, to be on the safe side, Mrs. Vash provided her guests with a thick circular mirror in a nubbly frame, which defied even a poker. En revanche, the gallant youths who frequented the coffee-room had scratched their names on it, as well as on the window-panes, in a hundred places, with their diamond rings.

There was an immense dumb-waiter. The tables were of mahogany, brightly polished; wax candlesticks, in silver sconces, were always used, to the disdainful exclusion of gas—and with one of those same candlesticks many a tall fellow had been laid low—but the floor was sanded, and triangular spittoons were dispersed about. It was the oddest combination of luxury and coarseness, of a club-room and a pot-house.

In this room, a dozen of the greatest dandies in England were assembled. Some had fifty thousand a year, and some had nothing, and owed thrice fifty thousand pounds; but, poor or rich, all were fashionable. It was a congregation of prodigal sons and prodigal fathers, but fathers and sons were both accustomed to sit in the high places, and to have room made for them.

WORKING MEN'S CLUBS.

The mechanic is "a very clubable man." The man of wealth and leisure joins a club for luxury's sake; the middle-class man, for the most part, does not belong to one at all, as his life is pretty nearly divided between his place of business and his family; but the working man is almost sure to be a member of some benefit society, or other body, which requires a place of meeting, and he has a natural and proper appetite for social intercourse, which cannot be indulged in his small, home. Practically, he has always had his club, holding his business meetings and jovial reunions at a public-house. This has led to a great deal of unnecessary drinking, and the object of Working Men's Clubs is to provide every facility offered by the public-house, without the temptations inseparable from the landlord's rooms.

The Working Men's Club is, in some measure, an offspring of the mechanics' institute of thirty years ago, but it proposes to do both more and less. Though including classes for educational purposes, it is not so severely scientific as its predecessor, and it has a greater eye to recreation and business. Originating in the Temperance movement, it has now outgrown all sectional limitations, and, while powerfully aiding the reformation of the working man, where he is prone to excess, it is not a mere agent or instrument of the teetotallers. One of the earliest of these institutions was the Stormont House Working Men's Association, started at Notting Hill in 1853; but this, as well as "the Hall," situated in the district commonly called the Kensington Potteries, is rather a centre of religious and temperance action than a club in the ordinary sense of the word. At the former, smoking and games are prohibited, while the latter has now no regular members, but is simply let out for the use of benefit and other societies, for the delivery of lectures, for prayer meetings and devotional services, and for occasional dioramas, &c. The Hall was set on foot in April, 1861, and for some time was more club-like in its character; but the weekly, quarterly, and yearly subscription system was not found to answer, and is now abandoned. Ten years earlier, some of the working men of Soho and the vicinity started a club on teetotal principles, which failed on account of the restrictions it imposed. The more active members of this body, however, have since set up another club in Crown-street, St. Giles's, on a freer and more inviting plan, and this is still battling with the difficulties which generally beset such attempts in their early days. The Rye Harbour Club, situated some two miles from Rye, was also one of the first established of these institutions. It was projected in 1855, and the club-house was erected in the following year, at an expense of one thousand pounds, which was entirely borne by Mr. W. D. Lucas-Shadwell, of Fairlight, near Hastings. The persons for whose benefit it was designed were the men employed at the harbour works. The house contains dormitories for such of the members as choose to use them, and the building is surrounded by a well-kept flower-garden. Temperance and religious meetings are held here, and discussions are allowed, but the subjects must be submitted beforehand to the President, the Rev. Mr. Churton, examining chaplain to the Bishop of Chichester, and vicar of Icklesham. The same Mr. Shadwell has recently interested himself in the creation of a club at Hastings, which has this peculiar and very democratic feature—that all the gentlemen members, including the mayor, are regular weekly subscribers at twopence.

In 1855, a club was established at Littlemore, near Oxford, by the Rev. G. W. Huntingford, the government of which, as that gentleman

says in an account he has written of its operation, was "oligarchical, with a dash of despotism." This is very often the case in small country towns and villages, where working men, conscious of their want of experience in business affairs, are glad to place themselves under the guidance of the local clergyman or squire. In some places, specific religious opinions are required as an indispensable condition of membership. But in others, the artisans and labourers have taken the matter into their own hands with admirable effect. A remarkable instance of this is presented by the club recently inaugurated and now flourishing at Wednesbury, a little town in the iron manufacturing districts of Staffordshire. The institution was first proposed at the commencement of last year; but the gentlemen who made the suggestion, or who promised to patronise it, slumbered over the work, and the mechanics, getting tired of waiting, set their shoulders to the wheel, rented a house on their own responsibility, furnished it with everything necessary for such an undertaking, and obtained so many members that, although the rooms were only opened on the 30th of May, 1863, the club has for some months past been entirely self-supporting, with no other receipts than the subscriptions of its members and the sale of provisions within its walls. The subscriptions are twopence a week and two shillings a quarter, the honorary members giving a yearly donation of a guinea. The number of members at the commencement was a hundred, but they increased so rapidly that it was soon found necessary to take larger and better premises, and the club now rents the old Town Hall at forty-five pounds per annum. Judging from the information we possess, we should say that a more perfect specimen of the genuine Working Men's Club cannot be found anywhere. The committee and all the governing officers belong to the industrial classes; members and subscriptions are canvassed for every Monday morning at the factories, and the rent of the building is guaranteed by the men themselves. In other places such undertakings have generally been set going by some benevolent lady or gentleman of fortune, and then handed over to the management of the members, subject to a few general conditions. This is the case at the village of Charlton Marshall, Dorsetshire, where Mr. Horlock Bastard inaugurated an institution for labourers, contributed largely to the funds, and presently left the men to govern themselves as they thought fit, though with certain provisoes, which are to be permanently observed. The patron of the newly-formed club at Eastbourne (Mr. William Leaf) stipulates that all intoxicating drinks, betting, gambling, profanity, and dancing — a rather strange assortment of offences—shall be strictly prohibited, and that the lecture-room shall be used for the advocacy of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks two evenings in each week. An attempt was made to introduce greater freedom into the constitution of the club, but it failed. The managing committee of this institution is partly composed of the resident gentry. It is curious to see how in these cases the peculiar fancies and antipathies of the patron creep out, with that craving which many excellent people display for tying down all those over whom they have any influence to their own standard of right and wrong, even in matters which are generally allowed to be debatable. One gentleman looks upon indulgence in fermented liquors as the root of all evil; so drinking is not allowed on the premises. Another thinks smoking the most deleterious of mortal habits, and therefore tobacco is as strictly prohibited as if James the First were the guardian genius. Mr. Bastard sets his face against both indulgences, and the labourers of Charlton Marshall must go for their pint and their pipe elsewhere. This is surely an error. A club so founded is based on the mere whims of an individual, and cannot successfully address human nature in the general, or hope to last after the novelty has worn out. To endeavour thus to erect one man's practice into a rigid law for others is as benevolently arbitrary as the conduct of that gentleman in an eating-house who, seeing a stranger disposing of his steak without mustard, and having ineffectually offered the condiment two or three times, with a remark that it was usual to accompany all forms of beef with that relish, at length roared out, as he dashed the mustard-pot down before the astonished diner, "Hang it, sir, you *shall* eat mustard with steak!"

The only way to avoid this species of dictation (most kindly in its motive, and often exercised by admirable men, but very injudicious as it seems to us) is for the working classes to establish their own clubs, and keep the management of them in their own hands. In large towns, artisans may do all that is necessary for themselves, if they only resolve to work in a spirit of cheerful brotherhood, and to abstain from personal rivalry and exaggerated self-assertion. It must be admitted that in one or two instances they have failed, owing to a want of the habits of cohesion and mutual concession — a conspicuous fault of the working classes, and the cause of much of their weakness. A club established at Leeds was originally managed by a committee of its own members; but dissensions ensued, and the wealthy and benevolent founder of the institution felt it advisable to take the government into his own hands. In many instances, however, these clubs are really under the control of working men, and are going on successfully. The great difficulty is at the outset; for an undertaking of this kind cannot be initiated without the expenditure of a rather large sum of money.

To enable humble people to get over this first stumbling-block, a body was established in the autumn of 1862, under the designation of the Working Men's Club and Institute Union, of which the president is no less a man than Lord Brougham, with a long list of notable persons for the vice-presidents. The active soul of this association (which has its offices at 150, Strand) is the secretary, the Rev. Mr.

Henry Solly; and there can be no doubt that the movement throughout the country during the past year has been greatly accelerated by the zeal and devotion of this gentleman, and of those who have acted with him. The precise objects of the society are—to place the advantages of these clubs prominently before the public,—to assist in their formation by advice, and (where necessary) by grants or loans of money for first expenses, as well as books, games, diagrams, fixtures, &c.,—and to help the local committees in the work of government until the new undertaking is sufficiently matured to go alone. So little, however, does the Union seek to fetter individual action, that, while entertaining a strong feeling against the sale of beer in such places, it has contented itself with simply recommending a rule for its prohibition, and does not refuse its support to any club declining to adopt that rule. In some cases, where the sale has been originally allowed, the local committees have on their own motion rescinded the permission: not, as we understand, because any grave evils resulted from the license, but because it was found not to harmonise with the main objects of a Working Man's Club, which are instruction and recreation. During the past year the Union was instrumental in establishing more than forty clubs; and from thirty to forty weekly applications for advice and assistance are still being received at the central office. In the metropolis and its suburbs, the Union is in relation with clubs at Bethnal-green, Bishopsgate, Brentford, Bromley-by-Bow, Canning Town, Crown-street (St. Giles's), Duck-lane (Westminster), Fitzroy Works (Euston-road), Forest Hill, Highgate, Holloway, Homerton, Hounslow, Kentish Town, Peckham, Pentonville, St. Clement Danes, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, Shoreditch, Southwark, Victoria Docks, Walthamstow, Walworth, and Wandsworth, and probably by this time with others, for the number increases so rapidly that it is impossible to fix it for more than a few days at any given point. The provincial clubs affiliated to the Union are so numerous that the mere mention of their names would be tedious. In addition to these, there are clubs, both in town and country, which are not in any way connected with the body presided over by Lord Brougham; but they are in the minority. The operations of the Union during 1863, were conducted at the very small cost of 700*l.*, the secretary having done a large part of his work gratuitously. This sum chiefly accrued from donations, for the regular income has not exceeded 150*l.* The association is now seriously hampered for want of funds, and an appeal to the public for assistance has been made by Lord Lyttelton, one of the vice-presidents. It is an appeal which we trust will be liberally answered by all who have money to spare.

The constitution of Working Men's Clubs necessarily varies, in some of its details, in different places, for a rigid uniformity is neither to be expected nor desired; but certain general features are to be found in most of them. The club-house contains a common room for conversation, newspapers, refreshments, and games; a library, a smoking-room, and rooms for educational classes, for the business-meetings of the committee, for transacting the affairs of friendly societies, &c., for lectures, concerts, parties, and miscellaneous amusements. In the country, a cricket-ground is often attached, and, even in London, space is sometimes found for playing at skittles and ninepins. The subscription, in some cases, is as low as a halfpenny a week, in others a penny, but is more commonly twopence, while, in a few instances, it is still higher. There are also, in most places, quarterly, half-yearly, and yearly subscriptions, by each of which a small proportionate saving is effected on the lower sum. Generally speaking, no election of members or payment of entrance-fee is required; but some few clubs demand both these guarantees. The house, in the greater number of cases, is kept open from eight in the morning until ten or eleven at night; some institutions, however, only open in the evening, after work-hours. Any one may enter at any time by paying the weekly subscription, and, as the great object is to make the working man feel as much at home as he does in the taproom of the public-house, the rough working dress is no disqualification whatever. The artisan or labourer may go to the club in his dirt, as the expressive phrase is, and he will find a lavatory, in which he may make himself tidy and comfortable for the evening. When he has done this, he can turn into the bar, and get his cup of coffee and bread-and-butter, or, if he has a steak or a rasher of bacon with him, he can have it cooked on the premises for a mere trifle. On this head, we may mention an excellent suggestion made by Mr. Forster, M.P., at a meeting held at Bradford a few months ago. He suggested the establishment, in connexion with these clubs, of a co-operative hotel—a public kitchen for the working classes, such as have already been started by themselves in several places. The large room, he observed, might be a kitchen during the day, and a reading-room at night. Dinners, if we mistake not, are even now supplied at a few of these institutions; at the Holloway Club, some of the members breakfast on the premises, and a coal club has been formed for the purchase of coals at a reduced rate; but these examples should be more widely followed, for workmen's clubs will succeed or fail in proportion as they more or less completely satisfy the legitimate wants of the class they address.

The social wants are very well supplied already. The member may, if he please, step into the smoking-room and enjoy his pipe; or he can read the newspaper or a book; or he can play a game at draughts, chess, dominoes, solitaire, or skittles; or he can attend a class for instruction in some useful branch of knowledge, or a forum for political debate; while, on special nights, he is entertained by concerts, lectures, and other amusements, to which he may bring his wife and children. With respect to the wives, their

opinion seems to be decidedly in favour of the club. They say it does not draw their husbands from home; it only takes them from the public-house, and sends them home in better temper, and with more money in their pockets. The members of friendly societies and the like who hold their committee-meetings at taverns, are almost compelled to drink, for "the good of the house." At the club they are under no such obligation, and the saving of money alone is an advantage not to be disregarded.

The largest of the London clubs, and perhaps the most interesting, on account of the various schemes engrafted on it, is the one established in Duck-lane, Westminster. The neighbourhood is one of the poorest and most squalid in the metropolis, though not far from the new line of splendid houses, Victoria-street. All who have penetrated the slums that congregate about the Abbey know the ugly sights and sounds, and the unsavoury exhalations, of that wilderness of poverty and vice—the rotten old houses, the muddy ways, the scowling population of brutalised men and shrewish women, lounging at the doors and windows, or wrangling on the pavement. It is a great place for costermongers, who are not generally the most civilised of men; and has acquired a disgraceful notoriety as the haunt of those wretched women who are the cause of so much evil to our household troops. Of course, there is also a good deal of honest poverty and hard, ill-requited labour in the district; and, in every respect, it is one which peculiarly demands the attention of the philanthropist. Miss Adeline Cooper—a lady who estimates as the highest privilege of her wealth the means of doing good—opened a club in the heart of this neighbourhood in the month of December, 1860, the expenses of which were mainly borne by herself. She believed that there was no better way of elevating the lives of the surrounding population than by meeting them in a thoroughly friendly, unassuming spirit, endeavouring to answer their wants in a manner which they could understand and appreciate, and winning their confidence by the absence of any wish to dictate. She even hoped that a class avowedly irreligious might be brought over to some form of faith, if it were presented to them in a way which they could accept or decline without the least prejudice to the other advantages which they derive from the institution. In many respects, she has been singularly successful. A year after the opening it was found necessary to enlarge the building, and last autumn it was almost entirely reconstructed, with a view to considerable additions. It is now a good sized hall, with rooms above and below, some of them of ample space, and all most efficiently ventilated. Its members have the benefit of a library (consisting of about three hundred volumes), a lavatory, a common-room, a class-room for education, a room for lectures, and other apartments for business or pleasure. As a rule, the club is only open at night, the members being at their work during the day. The subscription is a halfpenny a week, and there is no extra charge for the educational classes, as at most other clubs. The resident manager of the club is the only one connected with it who receives pay, and the refreshments, which are confined to biscuits and coffee, with ginger-beer in the summer, are supplied at cost price. More than six hundred members are now upon the books; but, as there are no subscriptions of greater permanency than a week, and as many of the people come some weeks, and not others, the number is practically very much less—in fact, not half—and the receipts are proportionately reduced. This limitation of the subscriptions has been found necessary, owing to the frequent migrations of the men. The plan originally was to demand arrears when a member returned after an absence; but the men could not see why they should pay when they had not been there. It was then arranged that, if a member had been away more than a month, he should be looked on as a new comer; but this induced some to stop away that time, so as not to pay the arrears, while those who did pay thought it hard that they should be the worse off for their greater conscientiousness. The weekly payment was then determined on; for, says Miss Cooper, in a letter to the present writer, "I wanted the men much more than the halfpence." Some of the poorest, however, are remarkably generous. One who has moved to another part of London, and cannot use the club, calls regularly in the course of the week, and renews his ticket, so that he may still be a member. Of course, with so low a subscription, the club is not very select; but it is not desired that it should be. On the contrary, it is the wish of Miss Cooper, and of all who have interested themselves in the establishment of the house, that an appeal should more especially be made to the very poorest and roughest of the surrounding community. No inquiries are made as to the antecedents of any man who comes with his halfpenny, asking to be admitted to the benefits of the institution. It is known that many of the members have been hard drinkers, and that some of them still are; but all that is demanded is, that they conduct themselves with decorum while they are in the building. The eleventh rule provides "that no person in a state of intoxication be permitted to remain;" but we believe the practice is not to disturb a man who has taken too much, if he keeps quiet, and is in no way offensive to good order. The object is to reform such persons by purely moral influences, and it is wisely hoped that the example of men possessing more self-respect may lead the offender into better ways. This confidence has been seldom abused. During the whole time the club has been open, it has very rarely been found necessary to eject any one by force; and the ill-doers have generally been very young men, with an obstinate habit of using bad language. Some of these, moreover, have afterwards come back and apologised. The management of the club is in the hands of a committee of the men themselves,

who pay over all the receipts to Miss Cooper. Not a single defalcation has at any time occurred, and the property of the club has been most scrupulously respected by the individual members. When we visited the premises a few weeks ago, we were shown over them by the secretary, a man of excellent sense and address, though following the humble occupation of a hawker. A large proportion of the members, by the way, consists of men engaged in street-avocations, even including crossing-sweepers, though the muster also comprises skilled artisans and tradesmen. In the large common-room at the basement (thirty feet by twenty-eight in measurement), we saw several persons quietly enjoying their cups of coffee and their pipes. On the same level are to be found the library, the kitchen, the lavatory, and every convenience necessary to the comfort of those who attend. Up-stairs, the committee of a Loan Society was holding a meeting. From this association as much as 15*l.* may be borrowed. Each member may take from one to four shares, at threepence each, and at the end of thirteen weeks he is entitled to a loan of 1*l.* for every 6s. 6d. subscribed, to be repaid (with interest at the rate of one shilling in the pound) by weekly instalments at the rate of sixpence in the pound for every pound borrowed, the borrower continuing to pay up his shares. In an adjoining room, reading and writing lessons were going on; and, at a later hour, we saw a small class assembled in the pursuit of a study which one would hardly have expected to find recognised at all in an institution addressing for the most part the humblest orders. A few young men were learning French. The class was started only a few months ago, for the benefit of some members who are employed in booksellers' shops and foreign merchants' offices. At the commencement, twenty joined, but the number has since fallen to twelve. We are informed that they make good progress, and, as the club is in union with the Society of Arts, there is every guarantee that whatever is done in the way of education will be well done. It is not improbable that some of the French students will enter their names for the next examination of the Society.

Besides the Loan Society, four other bodies are held in connexion with the Duck-lane Club: viz. a penny bank, a temperance society (with a sick fund for members), a cricket club, and a barrow club. The last-named is a particularly excellent fund.. By subscribing a shilling a week, any street salesman belonging to the general club may hire a barrow for use in his trade, and at the end of fifty weeks' subscription the vehicle becomes his own property without any further payment. The fund was started in consequence of the high rate of interest which the costermongers of the district were paying for the hire of their barrows and trucks, and which, of course, in the ordinary way of business, did not ensure possession of the property after any amount of payment in the shape of interest. The club, however, does not attend simply to the material wants of its members. A short prayer-meeting takes place on Wednesdays at mid-day; on Thursday evenings a Bible-class is held, at which a chapter is read and commented upon by a clergyman; and on Sundays a religious service is conducted at night. Attendance at all these observances is perfectly optional, and the entire liberty of choice thus left to the men has resulted in their regarding religion with more respect than most of them previously entertained. The numbers who go to the services are nevertheless very small in comparison with the total number of members of the club. The radical divergence of the labouring classes from established modes of faith is also shown, not unfrequently, at the Bible readings. Any auditor being permitted to make such objections as occur to him — objections which the clerical reader answers as best he can—several have availed themselves of the permission, and some exciting controversies have been carried on.

One of the great tests of the permanency of Working Men's Clubs will be, as usual with most projects, on the financial ground. Can they, or can they not, be made self-supporting? Undoubtedly there are difficulties (though it is to be hoped not insuperable difficulties) in the way of this consummation; of which difficulties one of the most serious is the migratory life of working men, and the consequent unsteadiness of the subscriptions at any one place. The Duck-lane Institute is the creature of private benevolence. It does not pay its own expenses; it does not pretend to do so, or expect to do so. The munificent foundress is even of opinion that these associations (allowing for a few exceptions, owing to peculiar circumstances) must always partake of the nature of charities, for that, if the subscriptions are raised above a nominal sum, the number of members will be but few. In many country towns, however, the number at a higher rate of weekly payment than Miss Cooper requires is very much larger. The club at Leeds, with a subscription of a penny a week, counts from 1500 to 2000 supporters, and has even gone up to 3500 on special occasions. Still, it must be admitted that this does not pay, and the deficiency is made up by the founder, Mr. Darnton Lupton, who administers the affairs of the body in the spirit of a paternal despotism. At Bristol, a club has been established at a low weekly rate of subscription, which is rapidly attaining a most prosperous condition. The Wednesbury Club, as we have already seen, pays its way, and is governed on thoroughly popular principles; here the weekly subscription is double that at Leeds, and four times that at Duck-lane. Those who support the system of non-payment, argue that the working man is no more degraded by going to a club, the expenses of which are mainly borne by some benevolent lady or gentleman, than a middle class parent is degraded by sending his son to Christ's Hospital. But there is surely a great distinction, as far as the feelings are concerned (and the feelings, rather than the reason, are the

arbiters in such cases), between the impersonal munificence of an ancient foundation and the direct gift of living people, who are known to suffer in pocket for what they do, and who necessarily acquire a certain right of control in virtue of what they have bestowed. We are most sensible of the large amount of good effected by the Duck-lane Club among a class that is generally too poor and too unaccustomed to such work to help itself; but we should prefer to see the working orders, as a rule, in a position of entire independence in this as in other respects. Five hundred members at twopence a week, with a few quarterly and yearly payments, will set one of these clubs on its own legs. Surely this is not too much to expect of artisans and labourers, more especially as the expenditure is certain to be accompanied by a saving in many unlooked-for ways.

Unless these clubs are made self-supporting, they can never be in a position of independence from external influences—from the caprices of well-intentioned tyranny, or the blight of patronage. Institutions for the benefit of working men should originate among, and be managed by, themselves. None but working men know thoroughly what working men want; besides, the habit of self-government is in itself no mean help towards a higher personal life and a greater fitness for the duties of citizenship. With regard to the sale of beer and the chances of drunkenness, we would refer to an account, published in the first number of this journal, of a rural club where beer is vended without any restriction, and with no ill results whatever. It should also be borne in mind that social rest and social recreation for the artisan and his family are the great objects to be attained in these institutions. Too much ambition in the matter of education is very likely to do them an injury rather than a good. Why is the working man, of all men in the world, to be perpetually ashamed of wishing to be amused and pleased?

SCHOOLMISTRESS AND ORGANIST.

WANTED, at Christmas, a TRAINED AND CERTIFIED SCHOOLMISTRESS, for a mixed Rural School, to teach Singing and play the Organ. Salary 45*l.*, with residence. Apply to the Vicar of Grumbleton.

Such was the announcement in the National Society's paper, which, for all I know to the contrary, may be found there, with a changed date in it, to this day. Miss Sniggles, one of the pets of her Majesty's inspectors, had thrown Grumbleton into a fit of excitement by entering into an engagement for another situation without taking advice of anybody, and without letting her lords, the school committee, or what was worse, her lady visitors, know a word about it. It was of no use to remonstrate with the young woman, Drowse said, for she was determined, and that too, with his help, to give up at Christmas the name of Sniggles. Hence hubbub, and advertisement aforesaid.

Drowse looks harassed and fidgety. He has had twenty letters this morning, he says, all dubbing him Vicar of Grumbleton, all applying for the situation, and most of them requesting particulars, which, he says, he has not time to give. But if the first post brings such a packet, what will not the subsequent posts bring, as the advertisement gets through the pickets of readers into the thick of the great scholastic host? "Look here," says Drowse, spreading the heap of letters before me. "Three damsels from Scotland, all for coming south. Welsh girl, can sing and play the harp. A harp isn't an organ. Can't make out the address. Nine consonants and two vowels in it. Look at this one:

"'Rev. Sir,—Being an unprotected female, twenty-six years of age, shall feel obliged by your informing me whether the school-house is in a lonely situation, or near the churchyard; whether you provide fuel, and what number of children in average attendance? If suitable, I would apply for the situation, and would give you every satisfaction if elected.

"'Yours most humbly,

"'MARTHA DUNK.

"'P.S. I can play the barrel-organ, but not the other kind.'

"What must I tell," says Drowse, "that young woman, or this?

"'Rev. Sir,—I beg to offer myself as a candidate for your school. I am trained and certified. Can sing, play the organ, teach knitting and sewing (double and single hemstitch). Arithmetic by a new and improved process. Am married, husband will make himself generally useful: could be overseer, or if a vacancy should happen, parish clerk, if you, reverend sir, fully approved of him.

"'Yours obediently,

"'EMILY WHALEBONE.

"'P.S. Am a strict disciplinarian.'

"Bless us," said the vicar, "here are six references offered by the strict disciplinarian, with a husband who can be made generally useful. Shan't write to any of them. Thirty or forty letters a day before dinner, indeed! Is that the postman? Ah, to be sure. Fifteen more. What's this?

"'Canon Boniface presents his compliments to the Vicar of Grumbleton, and begs to inform him that he has a trained pupil teacher just completing her education at Fishponds, who will, he thinks, suit him exactly. She has a very affectionate manner—(Halloa!)—with children—(Oh, well)—is nineteen years of age, and a good Christian young person. Canon Boniface does not know if she can play the organ, but these things (what things?) are generally taught in training institutions.' He doesn't tell me her name either."

My poor old friend Drowse looked round in great perplexity, and fairly groaned over the produce of the afternoon delivery. I sought to soothe him by placing in his hands a letter that

was scenting the room, and was adorned with griffins on a great armorial seal. He broke the seal, regardless of the griffins' necks, and read:

"Lady Skedaddle ventures to recommend to the Vicar of Grumbleton, Arabella Porkins. She has taught her infant school four months in the absence of the regular mistress. Arabella Porkins can keep the attention of the infants alive in the most wonderful manner, by telling them most interesting tales, wholly imaginary, and then she sings beautifully."

My friend laid down the letter in despair, and would not open any more. The spectacle of his bewilderment moved me to the suggestion that he should shake all the letters well together, pick out five at random, and then use his discretion in accepting one out of the five applications. It was a happy inspiration.

"Do you know," said Drowse, "that's worth consideration! I'll sleep on that idea of yours."

There are, so Drowse says, only a few instruments of torture now permitted by the law; but the Committee of the Privy Council is one of them. It consists, according to Drowse—and he went one day to see for himself—of a hostile body of officials, whose business it is to pick holes in the skins of the clergy, and then rub the sores. Still he admits that it is not a joking matter when he has the committee's eye, in the shape of Mr. Inspector, down on him. "You must give him a dinner, and be civil," says Drowse. "Only let him go into the school famished, and the first thing he does, is, to lose his temper, then he turns all their wits out of the children's heads, and in ten minutes he's brimful of such a report as makes my skin creep."

Such is the present trouble of our worthy and respected vicar. A good, kind-hearted old man he undoubtedly is, and slowly luminous. When one of his parishioners, irate in vestry, exclaimed that a Grumbleton parson would never set the Thames on fire, he quietly asked, "Who wants to set it on fire?" This gave him a day's credit as a wit in Grumbleton, and considering that it was said in vestry, it deserves remark. But we Grumbleton folks do not like to see our good old friend in trouble, and we rally round him as he quakes before this down-rush of damsels who have set their hearts upon him and his school.

A few days elapse, and, by the help of some friends, Drowse is made ready to face a Meeting of the Committee of the School. "School committees," says Drowse, "are not always so orderly as the children;" but then, he adds, "the more there are of you, the more stupid you are sure to be." His discourse on this subject is edifying. "Now," he says, "my committee is an instance. You will find in it clever men enough, taken singly, but, bless your soul, the average of intellect is a very low one in an assembly where clever and stupid men are mixed together. The stupid men drag down the clever men, and you would be surprised to see how timid and wavering many of the better class of minds become. They lose self-reliance when they work with a bold positive booby, have no fixed rallying-point, and have no champion to do the thinking for them. A stupid man who understands committee-work will wind all the fine thinkers up, spin them to sleep, and take them up in his spoon. It's as easy as peg-top."

This is, perhaps, the reason why our vicar gets on so well with his committees, as he certainly does contrive, in the long run, to have it all his own way, and either tires them out, or sends them to sleep.

Here we are, then, in vestry assembled; eighteen guinea patrons, who can send their children at half-price; three guinea and two guinea patrons; also the president, Mr. Drowse, who subscribes five guineas annually to the school. Drowse briefly opens the proceedings. He informs the committee what all, in our respective personal capacities, knew before, that Miss Sniggles had given warning to leave. He says this as if he were the most injured man in the world, in consequence.

A pile of letters six inches high lies on his right hand, and another pile half as thick again lies on his left.

"I may say, gentlemen," continues Mr. Drowse, "that all these applications have been carefully perused, and thought unsuitable. Any gentleman can look through them and satisfy himself of their value."

Up jumps a two guinea patron, a radical and a dissenter, as Drowse calls him: "We ought to have them all read, so as to form our own unbiased judgment, gentlemen, and not permit the rector to rough-ride the parish in this manner. I'm a two guinea patron though not a churchman, and I, for my part, haven't seen one of them; have you, Admiral Groggen?"

"Hasn't he," said Admiral Groggen, who just caught one word of the last speaker's address through his ear-trumpet. "He has seen half a dozen of them, I know. Enterprising girls. Come a long way on purpose."

Drowse, however, to save time, hands the packet of rejected addresses to our friend Groggen, with the request that he will read aloud from them, to satisfy himself and the committee generally.

"Here is one," says the admiral, "to begin with:

"'Reverend and BARBEROUS Sir,—On the 25th ultimo sent you application for school, with particulars that I was an unprotected female, who could play the barrel-organ, and asked whether you found fuel, whether the house was lonely, or near the churchyard. Surely a man—much more a gentleman and a clergyman—would never have suffered a day to pass—to say nothing of more than three weeks—without one line to satisfy a nateral and proper curiosity.

"'Yours, &c.,

"'MARTHA DUNK.'"

Roars of laughter from the committee, which lasted a considerable time, and left everybody in such a good humour, that it was determined to go through the rest of the file as an amusement.

"These ladies marry fast," remarked the

admiral, reading a postscript: 'I am married—without encumbrance.' What does that mean?"

"One reason why so many applications are made by the pupil teachers," said Drowse, "I am told, is, that they have a notion that the Grumbleton schoolmistresses are particularly likely to get offers. They tell one another at the Training Institutions, and that's one reason why I disapprove of bringing up a parcel of young women together."

"They corrupt one another," said the two guinea patron, who felt spitefully towards Fishponds, and did not object to agree with the vicar now and then.

"Corrupt one another," said Groggen; "fiddle-de-dee. How can they corrupt one another?"

After reading over twenty or thirty letters, Groggen lifted up a tied packet.

"What's this?" asked the admiral.

"Correspondence between me and Canon Boniface," answered the vicar. "You may read it, if you like. It's a great pity that all the additional trouble and vexation of such a correspondence should be had for nothing.

Without quoting the letters of the canon, which were, of course, lengthy, I may state that Drowse had started with the air of a man nettled that a stranger like Canon Boniface should presume to think he knew of anybody "that would suit him exactly." So he wrote a curt answer to that effect. Boniface rejoined in a dignified epistle, in dismal grandiose periods, which sounded like the tolling of the cathedral bell at a dean's funeral, except where a profane quotation or two from Horace broke in upon the bom—bom—bom. Drowse wrote a short rejoinder, merely asking the name of the candidate, if she *were* a candidate. But this personality made Dr. Boniface very angry, and he refused to give the name. So it was proposed by the two guinea patron, seconded by the grocer, and carried nem. con., that "This committee, having heard the correspondence between the Rev. Canon Boniface and the Vicar of Grumbleton, desires to express its censure of the former and its sympathy with the Rev. Mr. Drowse," all which is to be found in the chronicles of Grumbleton, as well as the remainder of the correspondence, which proved to be more voluminous than luminous, though it was interesting to Grumbleton, and was all printed in the local newspapers.

We were so long engaged over the candidates on the left hand of the vicar, that scant attention was paid to the dozen likely candidates on the right, whose claim demanded a more careful consideration. The guinea patrons began to drop off one by one, till at last there were only some half-dozen left, and then it was agreed that lots should be drawn, as the most satisfactory and expeditious way of settling the matter. So three damsels were then chosen, and a sum of money voted from the funds to enable them to come to Grumbleton for the purpose of undergoing examination before the committee, and that we might all know something of their musical powers, vocal and instrumental. This was considered by Drowse and Admiral Groggen, and by the two guinea patrons, indispensable; "For," said Drowse, "unless we see 'em, how can we tell whether they will do? If they dress too smart, you know, it's a sign of vanity."

"Tut! nonsense," quoth the admiral; "I like to see the girls dress as fine as they can. We always make our ships as smart as possible; and, for the same reason, we should like to see our women hoist their colours bravely."

Drowse was not disposed to contest the point. The three were to come. The day came and the damsels. Then the committee came, and was assembled in the church. Let each hear for himself. It was difficult for us to decide; but Admiral Groggen, who couldn't hear anything, formed his judgment; and his judgment, like that of Paris on the three goddesses, was not to be impugned. The ladies' committee had something to say; old Mrs. Tittling was not entirely satisfied; Mrs. Briar thought the young persons modest and respectful; but Mrs. Grobey said, she could see a snake in the grass. The ladies will, no doubt, have it all their own way, if they can only be brought to understand among themselves what their way is; but, pending the settlement of their differences, the president and patrons of Grumbleton will be permitted by them to give the golden apple to her who is, in the admiral's opinion, the most deserving candidate.

A GIPSY CONCERT IN MOSCOW.

We were dining at one of the chief restaurants in Moscow, I and Herr Grabe. We had been to the Russian Comedy, and were now disporting ourselves at supper.

A Russian traktir, or restaurant, is a remarkable place. There is nothing of the snug, homely comfort of the London tavern, and its intramural interment in mahogany bins; nothing of the cold, solitary splendour of the coffee-room of an English hotel; but, instead of this, a cumbrous, expensive magnificence, with the alloy of a semi-barbarism that casts across that magnificence a strange cloud like the shadow of a penny-gaff. The stalls have seats like the ponderous sofas that prevail in English lodging-houses, the tables are larger than they need be, and overhung with frouzy red curtains that cloud you round as with a tent.

The traktir we were patronising was a nest of rooms—up-stairs and down—rooms that opened one into the other in a labyrinthine, confusing, and endless way. The innumerable waiters are clad in white tunics, wound round with red sashes; and never less than half a dozen of these retainers surround you when you enter to seize your hat, or remove your fur cloak. Another peculiarity of the traktir is the enormous self-playing organ, that grinds out its deafening and dumbing music as you eat your cutlet, often drowning conversation, and always noisily intrusive.

We had eaten a slice of the yellow flesh of the sturgeon, and finished our cutlets, when

Herr Grabe, who had risen, and was overhauling a pile of Russian and foreign papers, suddenly advanced towards me, his stolid eyes beaming with pleasure, and waving in his podgy hand a long flimsy blue playbill.

"Hurrah! mein Herr Goodman," said he, "here is for you a great opportunity; here is our last Gipsy Concert—the last of the season—our wonderful song-gifted gipsies' concert; they sing and dance to-morrow at the Hermitage Gardens. It is a great opportunity, for the winter has now begun, and a day later you might have missed them. They are miraculous mimics; they are dancers of genius; they sing—Himmel, how they sing!"

At seven o'clock the next night a jolting roll through the suburbs and boulevards, the dry leaves rustling under our wheels, brought us to the great iron gate of the Hermitage—a gate crowned with coloured lamps.

The Hermitage is a sort of Cremorne—a pleasure-garden for summer use; like Cremorne suburban, and formerly the property of a nobleman. It has a pretty little domain, with a miniature lake and a sprinkling of good trees. It has little curtained alcoves for supping in, and a bar-room for wine and "grogs."

So far I could see at a glance as I threaded the wicket, paid for my ticket, and walked down the long scantily-lit garden-path, lured on by distant music that indicated some central source of amusement. Herr Grabe followed me with stolid enthusiasm, full of metaphysical meditations upon the price of hemp, like a good philosophical German merchant as he was.

Hurrying people passed us; not fantastic students, or prattling grisettes, but quiet, staid people, intensely grave and respectable, incapable of mercurial movement, or tumultuous gaiety. Dance! There was no dancing in them.

"Where is the dancing platform?" I said to Herr Grabe.

"Dance?" said Herr Grabe, with horror: "the government allows no dancing here. We are not civilised enough to dance in public."

Oh, the blessings of a paternal government! What can dancing have to do with politics? Can one be waltzed into republicanism, or pirouetted into Polish principles?

Fading trees do not look well when lit by dim lamps and tin reflectors like dish-covers. There is a dingy gaiety about half-dead trees, seen by an artificial illumination, that makes one think of theatrical forests, side-scenes, and footlights. A garden of Alcinous, on a cold autumn night, with rather a severe fresh wind sighing about the dead leaves, and turning them over, as if in search of some one put out of the way and hidden underneath, is not the most seductive of places, without some strong inducement to lead you there and keep you there when you are entrapped.

We took our seats in a sort of open-air proprietary chapel, facing an orchestra, and with our backs to a refreshment-counter. There were long rows of seats, with a walk down the centre between them. It was rather a cold night, and second-rate music is not warming, however noisy it may be. Some officers near me drew their fur-lined cloaks closer round them, with a suffering shrug; the ladies huddled together, like fowls on a perch on a winter's night.

The musicians were like any other musicians in Paris or London. Evening dress is not capable of much variety. From the leader downwards the band degenerated in perspective, till the player on the big drum in the background grew positively shabby. With long-suffering patience we bore the short gusts of music.

Weary of staring at the orchestra, I turned my eyes to the decorations, and they were not altogether despicable—superior to Cremorne, and all such modern Vauxhalls, but inferior to the tasteful variety of a Paris illumination.

There were some green metal aloes with broad, well-modelled leaves, wide and flapping as elephants' ears—such plants as grow in Indian jungles, and conceal tigers' dens and the lairs of enormous snakes. They stood on high pedestals above the flower-beds; the starry, branching flowers were formed by little jets of gas; the pure and brilliant flame blossoming naturally enough into flowers. A prettier night ornament could scarcely be imagined.

Suddenly a dark figure stole thievishly along the pasteboard battlement that formed the façade of the Music Theatre. Satan entering Eden could not have striven harder for ambush in order to avoid the angelic spears. Little lamps of a luminous violet colour were first lit by this dexterous climber; they were followed by rows of burning topazes and glow-worm-coloured lights, and radiant rubies, and little cups of bluish moonlight, that the envious and struggling wind kept in a restless flicker, and every now and then, in a fit of irrestrainable petulance, blew into total darkness.

The black hand passed over them with the nimble flame, and brushed them back again into light. And, all this time, the chilly concert went on, and the dry leaves blew about inquiringly, and the dull visitors patrolled, and the coquettish blondes laughed and drank tea, or sipped sticky liqueurs, and talked of the gipsies.

I do not think there is much real taste for music in Russia. People talk too much at the Opera. Everything is French, German, and Italian, and what is not one of these three is bad—I mean, in the fashionable world only, for the native and Cossack airs are very wild, sad, and original, and the peasants are passionately fond of them. A spurious and half-learned civilisation seems to paralyse for a time in Russia the natural instincts of taste.

On went those black-clad automatons with their mechanical playing, doling out by the bar, without feeling or passion, the beautiful serenade in Don Juan, the wizard waltz in Faust, the majestic wedding-march of Mendelssohn.

But suddenly the band broke into life, and thundered out with the fire and exactitude that

only delight and practice can give, the Russian national anthem: "God defend the Czar"—the most martial and passionate of national anthems; and far superior, in my humble opinion, to our "God save the Queen." Every hat went off, and five times running, as the tune ended, a band of students and officers advanced to the orchestra, and shouted for a re-performance, uttering barbaric yells, such as might have better become wild horsemen of the Don than modern Russian gentlemen.

And now the open-air service closed, the congregation thawed away, and melted into the surrounding walks. The leader of the orchestra regarded us, as we remained almost the last on the benches, with a look of careless pity, as he slipped his violin into its baize bag, and turned to leave the stage. We joined the stream of people eager for the next phase of amusement, and found ourselves at a small toll-gate, where some officers were buying concert tickets. As we were buying ours, half a dozen dark-eyed, untamed-looking men, in red shirts and blue caftans, passed; one of them was mounted, and, as he approached us, gave a shout, and dashed off at a canter down a side-walk, like an aide-de-camp on a special errand.

"Wunderschön!" exclaimed Herr Grabe; "those are some of the gipsies."

We showed our ticket, and passed into the enclosure. It was a large area, facing a covered stage, with no roof, but long strings of artificial green leaves that, running parallel to each other, formed a sort of flat tent above our heads, suitable for summer, but as inadequate covering for a chilly October evening as a gauze dressing-gown would be for the Arctic Ocean.

Herr Grabe grew oracular.

"You will see something typical," he said, "my English travelled friend; not the Spanish gipsy dances, old as the Phœnicians, not all wriggle and oscillation, like the Nautch girls in India, mere shuffle of the feet—toe and heel scarcely lifted from the ground. No, this will be truly a Walpurgis-night, enchanted, frenzied dance, quite original; deducible only from principles of Arabic æsthetics, no more like your tame European dances, than an ostrich of the desert is like a farm-yard goose. Thunder and storm! How long the Egyptians are raising the curtain!"

As if his reproof had been heard, the curtain instantly rose, and disclosed a stage with an amphitheatre of chairs. To them rapidly entered in careless procession—the EGYPTIANS.

Their leader was a tall handsome woman of, say, two-and-twenty, evidently the queen and beauty of the tribe; her large dark eyes were full of a mischievous triumph, as she sailed in, not ungracefully, in her ermine robe, and took the central seat placed for her. Her manner was not retiring or timid, yet there was just enough of deference and wild shyness about her bearing to make one assist in applauding her on her arrival. She was perfectly at her ease, and yet not enough so not to be glad to turn and laugh and whisper to the women next her. She did not look like a lady, and yet you scarcely seemed to wish to judge her by the civilised standard. There was an indisputable look of command about her, and a confidence of success that showed the practised actress.

Next her, on the left, sat a fat pleasant-looking woman, quiet and lady-like in manner, and with the air of a retired prima donna. She was dressed less richly, but in better taste. This was the dowager-queen, I felt sure. Next her came a middle-aged woman, with rather flaccid cheeks, but with a humorous expression about her large dark eyes, that augured well for comedy. The other four women were coarsely pretty, their eyes, however, darkly luminous, and large as Cleopatra's. The dress of all of them was peculiar, and rather bizarre and Asiatic in character.

Then the men came in, tall rough fellows, with tumbled black hair, who ranged themselves, with sullen shyness and half-rebellious discipline, in a semicircle behind the chairs.

Last of all, in came the chief, the leader, the husband, I presume, of the queen, for he placed himself near her, and beat time for the whole of the performers. He carried a small species of guitar, peculiar to the Russian gipsy, in his right hand. He was a tall, supple young man, with a pointed, crafty, Spanish sort of face, and was dressed in rather a theatrical short tunic of red linen, that made his legs appear almost awkwardly long, though their pliancy and the smallness of his feet still served to prove their capacity for swift and practised movement.

The concert began with a solo by the dowager-queen, a wild song but of no special character, sung with a good but a veiled voice—a voice that had lost its purity and resonance.

Now a cry arose of "Marscha! Marscha!" a delighted expectant cry.

"Who is Marscha?" I asked.

"Marscha is their prima donna, the one in ermine," replied Herr Grabe.

Marscha the majestic, queenly in her ermine, leaned forward and bowed, not disdainfully, but with a sort of serene complacency, as one accustomed to such homage.

"Oulitza! Oulitza!" shouted the well-dressed mob.

Marscha turned and smiled on her companions, as much as to say, "The old cry. See how I lead them and rule them. I am their true queen to-night; the czar may have them to-morrow." So looked the saucy beauty, as she bowed to the well-dressed mob that shouted and jostled with delight; and all those lesser stars, her companions, smiled and whispered.

I have seen more beautiful singers, loftier and whiter brows, eyes more dove-like, more saint-like, more full of sunshine or of fairy glamouring power, but I never saw anywhere so much of the grace and archness of expression as Marscha bent forward, seized the guitar, and began.

What a voice! How mellow, soft, and yet powerful, gushing forth without an effort, and full of endless rises and falls of semitones! With what a sensibility and expression she gave the

words as she tossed back her head, shook it with a most bewitching scorn, or leaned forward with half-shut mischievous eyes, as she struck the guitar-strings with playful triumph.

As she finished her first song, the shouts of "Oulitza" (the voice dwelling on the "Ou" in a sort of long-drawn howl) were followed by fresh cries of "Marscha" (Mary).

Marscha sang "Oulitza" over again with more delightful archness and tenderness than before. I think I never heard a singer who attended more attentively and instinctively, not merely to light and shade, forte and piano, but also to every minute inflection of meaning.

It was a beautiful air, full, as I took it, of passionate entreaty, of almost Oriental adoration, of lovers' coaxing arguments, of playful quarrel —a rustic love-story, in fact, changeful as April. And every time Marscha sang it a fresh colour seemed to transfuse it, so varied were the tones of her voice, and the phases of her grace, pride, archness, and imperial coquetry.

I asked Herr Grabe the meaning of the words, for the song was in Russian patois. Alas! for my imaginations.

"They call it a gipsy air," he said, "and so it partly is, but I have certainly heard it in Germany. It is called there 'The Beer House.' It describes a droll fellow staggering out of a beer-shop and seeing two moons positively winking at him; presently the houses on each side of the street begin nodding too, and the church dances a cavalier seul. Then a fit of maudlin melancholy supervenes, and he resolves to give up his boozing ways, turn his back on the seductive beer-shop, and go back to the old gipsy tent and his old chums.

And on this stupid old drinking-song I had thrown away all my enthusiasm; and that was the revelling measure in which Marscha had expended all her fine acting. Bah! I was vexed —I was hurt. But who was I? A mere foreign mist. The applause was tremendous. The people rolled and billowed with delight. Marscha's eyes lit up, but she received the applause with the majesty of an empress.

The next song was a part-song with chorus. The men struck in nobly. The air was wild and humorous. The leader gave the signal for the chorus by a swift right-about-face and a wave of the handle of his guitar as he struck the bass chords. It was a half-savage Tartar tune, but tinged with fun, with a dashing crescendo in the swiftest speed, that closed the first half of the concert. The performers, led by Marscha, quitted the stage for a time, and descended to earth, to take tea, "grogs," and champagne in the refreshment-room.

They moved about the garden with royal condescension. They nodded to officers, who praised and flattered them with a high-bred gallantry worthy of the imperial salons. They collected in gaily-dressed groups round the back door of the theatre. They held animated converse with their chief, the young man in the scarlet shirt, who cantered about the gardens with a purposeless violence on a weedy brown horse. As for Marscha, she wrapped herself in her ermines, and, retiring to a quiet corner of the refreshment-room with a sallow droll-looking woman in a sort of chintz dress, sipped a tumbler of boiling tea in her own grand bewitching way, the cynosure of all neighbouring eyes.

Presently there was a clash of brass, and a fizzing of violin-strings, as the crowd drifted back to their seats under the leaf-roof with much cackle of cheery talk, and much conjecture as to Part Two of the gipsy performance. We jostled down into our places; there was some marrow-bone-and-cleaver music of the Nabuchadonosor order, and the curtain drew up.

No actors in London or Paris could have grouped the scene better. It was an encampment of Russian gipsies preparing for the ceremonies of a marriage. All was drollery and bustle. There were some rough-bearded fellows on one side wrangling at cards, and being scolded by a witch of an old woman, who, ladle in hand, kept alternately reviling every one for not helping more in the preparations, and stirring a caldron of cabbage-soup, that, hanging from a tripod of sticks, seethed over a fire. There were boys dancing, shouting, and playing mischievous tricks. There were women arranging seats for the bride and bridegroom.

There was a distant shout of welcome, a trample of feet, and in came the bride and her attendants (Marscha, of course, looking charming in her bridal finery and streaming veil); then came a clatter of hoofs, and in, at a great pace, dashed the chief on horseback—the skilful beast he bestrode whirling round and round with artfully feigned impetuosity, and dispersing, at every turn, the gipsy retinue, who, with equal art, made way for it, with a pretence of fear.

The bride was seated at a table, on which stood the bridal offerings covered with muslin. With delightfully acted shyness she received the homage of the bearded portly visitors, who, in their blue cloth caftans and high boots, acted the part of small tradesmen, and other well-to-do guests. It was all in dumb show, for no one spoke a word, but the men bowed, smiled, and gesticulated, and the twenty or thirty actors bustled about to express their pleasure at seeing each other, and at the general splendour of the entertainment.

Through the crowd all at once broke the old Canidia of a cook, her grey hair about her ears, her ladle in her hand. She executed a grotesque dance, quite tipsy in its drollery, its vigour somewhat retarded by assumed age. Take it altogether, it partook of the hornpipe character, and was, perhaps, better adapted for male than female performance. At intervals she barked and yelped, and all the gipsies shouted in the Irish manner.

Then a smart boy of fourteen, red-shirted and booted, his lank hair of an oily blackness, his face brown and sly, accepts the crone's challenge. He comes forward, amidst handclappings and chorus-singing, with a handkerchief in one hand, and executes a wild, breakdown dance, more subtle than our nigger dances,

and less droll, but far more scientific and difficult. Every now and then he drops the handkerchief, and picks it up in a certain ecstatic moment of the dance, without losing time, and this feat is rewarded by storms of laughter and applause. His little booted legs shake about as pliant as a harlequin's, and his sly vain face preserves one steady expression of crafty determination. He ends a series of impossibilities by a gigantic effort in double shuffling. "That boy," I said to Herr Grabe, "if he isn't hung prematurely for picking pockets, will become a world-known ballet-master."

"No," said he, "it is wunderbar; but these people have refused offers to travel that would have brought them hundreds and hundreds of pounds. They are proud; they are free as Tartars; they like their own ways. Have you not heard how Catalani once, after hearing one of their women sing, took off a shawl, worth thousands of roubles, that some emperor had given her, and threw it over the gipsy's shoulders, exclaiming: 'I am dethroned—this is the Queen of Song!' It may be true: I tell it you for true. Why not?"

And all this time Marscha sat queenly in her white attire. Now the chief stepped to her, and handed her a gipsy guitar. It seemed impossible to approach that woman without reverence. She took it, and threw the blue band across her left shoulder. Instantly a tremulous tune rose from the strings of the wild instrument.

The great finale of the gipsy entertainment was approaching. There was to be a duet sword-dance between the chief and that tall stately buxom girl on the right of Marscha. Now I had heard gipsy music in Spain, where the antiquarians declare it to be partly Phœnician and partly Grecian in character. I had found it to resemble in many respects the Arab music, being monotonous, quaint, and full of minute inflections, almost too subtle to be distinguished except by a practised ear; at times exciting and passionate, yet generally more like an incantation than pure honest music, and there can be no doubt profoundly corrupt in its mystic significance.

The guitar, and the incessant hand-clapping, furnished a fitting music for such a dance, which is probably of Tartar origin and of extreme antiquity. The chief, girding himself up, and looking down at his boots to see if he was in sound dancing trim, stepped forward to the foot-lights, and addressed some words in Russian, that I could not hear, to an officer in white uniform, who sat in the front row.

The officer rose, bowed, and unbuckling his heavy cavalry sword, handed it up in its glittering steel sheath to the gipsy dancer. He took it, drew the blade from its sheath, and returned the sheath to the owner.

Then, holding the sword in his hand, and over his head, he advanced to the girl who, wrapped in her shawl, paced forward to oppose him in the dance. They challenge each other, they cross and interchange with the gravity of minuet dancers. She points at his feet and marks out the figures with the agility of a Highlandman exulting in the Fling, but with more lithe and crafty neatness. He is so quick, you can hear nothing but the tap of his heel and toe, and the soft low beat of his companion's toe and heel. Now and then, as the band shout in a jerky ecstatic way, he slashes the sword through the air, and cuts figures of light before the girl's unflinching eyes, she all the time playing graceful antics with her shawl, that she alternately loosens and tightens. There is no violence about the dance, but it is full of a robust Spanish spirit, and is defiant in its character. Suddenly the music quickened, the dancers redoubled their efforts, and approached each other more closely; swift as lightning that horrible menacing sword flew round the girl's head, whistled over and around her on left and right, close, close—one hair's breadth more—one instant of haste or panic, or of thoughtless and excited eagerness, and the gipsy girl had fallen dead on the stage.

"Whish—whish!" went the sword, glittering through the air, the dance growing every second faster and madder. Suddenly, an uncontrollable thirst for blood seemed to seize the swordsman; he passed his hand upward through his hair, and it stood on end in a maniacal, Corybantic way. Then, tossing the sword behind his back, he raised it to cleave that proud and smiling antagonist to the breast-bone; he raised the sword——that instant the music stopped, the dance was over, and the applause broke forth like thunder in a Brazilian forest.

I wiped the hot dew from my forehead, and gave a sigh of relief.

"It is divaine, it is divaine!" exclaimed my German friend; "come, let us hurry off to the fireworks."

And so we did. The people, ungratefully eager for new amusement, were crowding in black masses on the dark edge of the garden lake. They looked like ghosts waiting for Charon on the banks of Lethe's fat and sullen stream.

Here and there a spark rose up on the opposite shore, and by that spark we could see black figures moving about with lights.

"Bang!" went the maroons, with a cracking detonation; up went a golden line, and broke into a star of burning diamonds. "Bang! bang!" with spiteful and abrupt reports.

"Hiss, hiss!" like flying serpents, went the fireworks, and branched into saffron-coloured, starry fire; into golden willows, into branching threads, each tipped with a star of brilliants.

Up went other fireworks, that, high up, blossomed into blue, and crimson, and green, and melted into the cold unruffled darkness.

"Whiz! hiss! whiz!" spread the fire over the frameworks, and broke out into circles, and letters, and crowns, and laurel-leaves, and the emperor's name, and "God protect the Czar!" and burnt away at last into black revolving scaffolding, with here and there a lingering spark.

Out on the water too, like flying serpent-fire, burst out the fireworks, and ran and blazed and hissed and discharged their very lives in breath of flame and showers of golden sparks.

But even to fireworks there is an end, and as the last rocket shot forth its stars, we ran to the gate, leaped into a droschky, and drove at a rattling pace homewards.

The next day, late in the afternoon, I went again to the Hermitage alone. The Bower of Vain Delights had a forlorn look; dead leaves strewed the walk. Blackened squib-cases floated on the lake, below the tawdry pasteboard mountains.

In the stables, an enormous elephant swayed to and fro, and undulated his proboscis. In the court-yard, a tame bear lamented angrily his blindness. The empty stage looked disconsolate as a house after a funeral. The roof of artificial leaves rustled in the cold air. The tawdry triumphal arches seemed to shrink away from the honest daylight, that is so frank, and so disdains shame and concealment of all kinds. I felt like the magician's boy in the Indian fable, who unwittingly has repeated the spell that has turned his father's palace into a poverty-stricken hovel.

OYSTERS AND OYSTER CULTURE.

THERE are aristocratic and plebeian oysters, suited to the pockets as well as to the palates of their admirers, and amongst the former our natives are pre-eminent in flavour as well as in price. This distinction has long prevailed. Phillips, who published in the reign of Anne a poem, the name of which is disclosed in the following lines, declared

> Happy the man, who void of care and strife,
> In silken or in leathern purse contains
> A *splendid shilling;* he ne'er hears with pain
> Fresh oysters cried!

The democratic, or deep-sea oysters, principally from the Channel Islands, earliest take the field in London, the Colchesters next become visible, while the high-bred or "melting natives" from Milton, Whitstable, Faversham, and other localities on the Kentish coast, wait to see the grouse and partridge seasons pass, and come in with the pheasants in October.

The old English line which has become a proverb, "In the R'd months you may your oysters eat," is a mere translation of a Leonine rhyme of the Middle Ages—

> Mensibus erratis,
> Vos ostrea manducatis.

The natives are reared from the developed spawn, technically termed the *spat,* which is transplanted from its birthplace to feeding-grounds appropriated to this privileged class; for, like other fashionables, they are believed to improve by changes of sea air, and become metamorphosed from all fin and no fat, to all fat and small fin. They thrive best in the artificial beds of sheltered bays and estuaries, and improve most in the neighbourhood of fresh-water springs. The greenish colour which the fins sometimes present, is acquired by exposing the adult oysters in shallow pools to the sun's rays, and probably, in some measure, arises from the absorption of the microscopic shoots of delicate marine plants, rendered more tender by the action of the waves, and tinged by the influence of light. The natives are not full grown until between five and seven years old, and as we learn the age of a horse out of his own mouth, that of the oyster is disclosed by annual layers on the convex shell. Oysters possess distinct organs of digestion, respiration, and circulation, with a well-defined nervous system. They are sensible of light, and close their valves at the shadow of an approaching body, so that the undulation of the waters may not reach them. When brought to Billingsgate, the natives are subjected to sanitary treatment by being placed in vats of sea-water, or of water holding a saline mixture in solution, to which oatmeal is added, a process which tends rather to increase their fat than improve their flavour.

When the native is in perfection, the fish should approach the roundness of a ball, and be white as the kernel of a nut. According to Kitchener, the barrelled oysters are commonly the smallest natives not full grown; but perhaps he goes rather too far in asserting that all the objections which exist to the use of unripe vegetables, apply to immature animals.

Geological researches constantly reveal the long-entombed remains of well-shaped and full-grown fossil oysters, which make us regret that such dainties came into the world before their time, and to little purpose. The oyster-bank in the vicinity of Reading, in Berkshire, an inland county, is a most remarkable deposit, occupying six acres, and forming a strata over two feet deep. Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, whom Johnson honoured with a life amongst the British poets, published in 1667, in his History of the Royal Society, an original paper, in which he complained that, "although British oysters have been famous in the world since the island was discovered, yet the skill how to set them aright has been so little considered amongst ourselves, that we see at this day it is confined to some narrow creeks of one single county." That county was, of course, Kent. Essex has since become a competitor, the Burnham oysters from the river Crouch being highly prized; indeed, the Kentish bishop, in his zeal, would seem to have forgotten that, in the days of Queen Bess, Colchester sent presents of oysters to the royal favourites, Leicester and Walsingham. The Romans were great admirers of oysters, and early learned the excellence of those from the Kentish coast. Juvenal alludes to the discriminating taste of the court sycophant, Montanus, at the feasts of the Emperor Domitian, in lines which have been thus paraphrased:

> Who
> At the first bite each oyster's birthplace knew,
> Whether a Lucrine or Circæan he had bitten,
> Or one from Rutupinian deeps in Britain.

A Roman millionnaire, Sergius Orata, whom Cicero designated the master of luxuries, conceived the idea of originating an oyster-park in the Lucrine Lake, a salt-water lagoon on the coast of Campania, adjoining the Gulf of Baiæ, and separated from the sea by a narrow strip or

bank of sand. The lake was shallow, and situated in the vicinity of the enchanting, although highly volcanic, country which the rich and luxurious Romans were in the habit of selecting for their splendid rural villas. In those retreats, they enjoyed the Lucrine and Circæan oysters, the latter from the coast of Latium; according to Pliny, "the British shores had not as yet sent their supplies at the time when Orata ennobled the Lucrine oysters." It is difficult to conceive the mode of carriage that enabled them to retain their fulness and flavour in a journey to the imperial city, but Apicius is said to have supplied the Emperor Trajan with fresh oysters all the year round. The Rutupinian district of England derived its name from the Roman city of Rutupinus, now Richborough, or the town of the Reach, in the Isle of Thanet, being built on what was then an estuary. On its destruction by the Danes, and within a mile of its site, rose the Saxon town Sondwick, built by Canute on the salt sands, where the oysters "most do congregate;"—now the modern Sandwich, one of the Cinque Ports. It is believed that in the days of the Romans the surrounding country was covered with water; and Mr. Roach Smith, in his recent antiquarian researches respecting Richborough, informs us, that in digging in the neighbouring marshes, what were once large beds of oysters are to this day brought to light. Steam has revolutionised the oyster trade; but although the production must have increased vastly since the days of Bishop Sprat, the supply does not keep pace with the demand, arising from increased wealth and population; and the price of the real natives has risen higher and higher, until it has become extravagant. When Christmas approaches, pyramids of oyster-barrels crowd the platforms of our railway termini, destined for the wide circles of rural cousins, in return for brawn, hares, and country turkeys.

The imperial government of France, with the view of multiplying those favourites of epicurean taste and social enjoyment, has recently devoted much attention to the artificial culture of oysters, and confided the inquiries to M. Coste, a member of the Institute, who had made the natural history of fish his peculiar study. M. Coste has officially visited all the celebrated oyster-rearing coasts, and amongst others those of the British Isles; indeed, the number of his christian names—Jean, Jacques, Marie, Cyprien, Victor—is sufficient to entitle him, under a separate one, to naturalisation in almost every European state. In the course of his exploratory researches he discovered, in the Lago de Fusaro, on the Neapolitan shore, celebrated for its trout, the remains of ancient salt-water tanks still visible, which lead to the belief that it is the site of the ancient Lucrine Lake. Numerous remains of ancient villas and tombs can be traced in its vicinity; and it had been long supposed to be the crater of an extinct volcano, a surmise which was proved to be correct by the emission, in 1838, of such quantities of mephitic gases as destroyed all the oysters. The race has been restored, and the tanks discovered are probably the remains of those laid down two thousand years ago by Sergius Orata, who derived a large income from his oyster-beds on the spot. It would seem that pieces of rock, to which the young oysters adhered, had, with a view to transport them undisturbed from the natural waters in which they had been born, been brought and deposited in the oyster-parks. The fishermen on Lake Fusaro, and other Italian salt lagoons, even at this day form artificial banks by sinking stakes in the ground in the form of a circle, which rise above the surface of the water, so that they may be reached and raised by the hand when necessary. Stakes are also laid down in rows, connected by ropes, from which fagots composed of thin pieces of wood are suspended, the ropes enabling the number of movable pieces to be increased as they may be required. It is probable that the present inhabitants only traditionally follow the practice of their celebrated ancestors; ancient funereal vases are preserved in the museums at Rome on which may be clearly traced the outlines of the modern Italian system. It will form one amongst the many strange revelations of our times if, after the lapse of so many centuries, we shall adopt on the English coast—from which the Romans derived their most delicious oysters—the example and appliances of ancient Rome as a means of multiplying the production of our natives.

In the spawning season, which is generally from June to September, the oysters shed their spat, but they do not, like other marine creatures, abandon their young; they protect them during the process of incubation in the folds of their mantle, between their branchial plates. The youngsters remain in the mucous matter requisite for their evolution, until they ultimately effect their embryo development. The mass which the young oysters then form, resembles in colour and consistence thick cream; whitish at first, it gradually turns yellow, and ends by degenerating into a grey brown, or grey violet colour, losing its fluidity in consequence of its absorption as nutriment. That state announces that the development has terminated, that the oysters may cease to be nurses, that the infants are fit for weaning, and it indicates their approaching expulsion from the maternal shells. Previous to starting, the tiny brood may be seen, through a powerful microscope, opening and shutting their minute valves, and practising their evolutions in a rotatory motion preparatory to their entrance into independent existence. The moment they emerge from their cradles, they roll about in search of future residences, being furnished with an apparatus for swimming, which enables them to seek some solid body to which they can attach themselves. The number of young ones thus ejected from the mantle of a single mother cannot, it is conceived, be less than from one to two millions; but if the little floating animalcules are unable to find resting-places, they inevitably perish. The Italian practice is admirably adapted to providing

against the immense losses which result; the portions of rock and fagots with which they encircle and cover the artificial banks are precisely what nature requires to arrest in their passage the minute floating population, and to present surfaces on which it can settle, as a tree on which they rest enables a swarm of bees to be swept into the hive. When fixed, each of the little corpuscules, still almost invisible, begins to form its shells. Shakespeare makes the fool in Lear ask the old king: "Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?" Lear: "No." Fool: "Nor I neither!" And the question would, we believe, puzzle even our modern wiseheads. On raising the twigs, the annual growth of each of the young brood is distinctly traceable; but the fishermen, as the breeding season commences, take care to present fresh fagots, and, when the fishing begins, they withdraw from the water the wood on which the full-grown oysters had settled. After having gathered the grapes on those artificial vines, they restore them again to the beds, in order to become the resting-places of a new generation, renewing and perpetuating the race by annual additions. The oysters, when raised, are deposited in ozier baskets of a spherical or bottle form, with large meshes gradually enlarging from the mouth downward—possibly a preferable form to our oyster-barrel—and it is probable that similar ones were used for carrying the British oysters to Rome.

The Italian system having been approved of, it has been adopted by the imperial government of France, and extensive artificial oyster-parks have been laid down under the direction of the minister of marine on the French coast, particularly in the Bay of Brieuc, near Brest, in Brittany. The locality was considered favourable, for our Kentish dredgers annually expend, with a view to colonisation, considerable sums in the purchase of spat at Granville, on the same south-west shore. The official reports speak highly of the success of the experiments; fascines are adopted formed of numerous branches bound together, and anchored by large stones, so as to be kept constantly afloat. These fascines, when raised, have been found covered with oysters in such profusion as to resemble the trees of an orchard in spring, in all the exuberance of its blossoms. We are assured by M. Coste that twenty thousand young oysters have been counted on a single fascine, not occupying more space in the water than a sheaf of corn similarly bound would in a field, and it is needless to speculate on their pecuniary value when they shall arrive at perfection. It has also been ascertained that by paving the bottom of the park with oyster-shells, myriads of the floating monads are attracted and induced to settle. As it has been found that oysters born in a particular spot improve in size and flavour on transplantation, even to other parts of the same bed, it has been proposed to form the artificial banks so that they may be floated from one portion of the feeding-ground to another, by having the fascines attached to movable frames on the surface in the nature of buoys. Our insular position must present many available localities, and the example of our neighbours ought to stimulate similar experiments in all the favourable spots on our extensive coasts, the more particularly as an act of the last reign (7 and 8 William IV., c. 29) has conferred and secured territorial rights to the proprietors of all English oyster-beds. An excellent site for the formation of new English oyster-beds has been lately obtained in a grant of shore near Harwich.

Scotland is justly proud of her pandores, so highly prized in Edinburgh, and an ancient rivalry exists between our epicures and the viveurs of the sister island, as to the relative excellence of the natives in comparison with the most celebrated Irish oysters. Those from the bay of Carlingford, on the coast of Louth, north of Dublin, were long famous, but such was the voracity of the public, and the avarice as well as ignorance of those interested in the beds, that some years since the race disappeared as if they had been exterminated. The cause was of course traceable to over-dredging, as well as to the want of due precautions to renew the brood, and as nature makes no provision for the spontaneous or immediate revival of a species that has been allowed to become extinct, the superior merits of the Carlingfords have become mere matter of history. The Redbank Burren oysters from the coast of Clare, bordering on the southern extremity of Galway Bay, are deservedly extolled; the fin is of a deep olive green, and the fish smacks of the Atlantic. The beds lie on a limestone shore, over subterraneous crevices, through which the fresh water of the springs from the surrounding mountains rises and mingles with that of the ocean, and to this admixture their excellence is attributed. M. Coste, than whom there cannot be higher authority, being well acquainted with our natives in their perfection, adjudged the palm to the Redbank Burrens, declaring that they were the best oysters he had ever met. On first tasting them, he expressed his admiration of their whiteness and their plumpness by exclaiming, "Chicken! chicken!" A few barrels occasionally reach London as special presents, but the demand is too great in Dublin to permit Londoners practically to test the judgment of M. Coste.

Some local acts regulate particular English oyster fisheries—such, for instance, as those in the neighbourhood of the Medway—by which a jury of free dredgers are empowered to make regulations; but we believe that there is no general law of that nature applicable to all the oyster-beds on our coasts. Ireland, however, possesses a special legislative measure for the increase and government of her oyster fisheries—the Irish Fisheries Act of eighteen 'fifty, the forty-first section of which enables the owner or occupier of any land bordering on the sea, or on any estuary, or any person with the consent of such owner or occupier, on obtaining a license from the Commissioners of Fisheries, to form and plant an oyster-bed on the adjacent shore, and confers on it all the

attributes of property. The report of the commissioners, presented to parliament during the last session, states that they have already granted licenses to twenty-six different proprietors for laying down new oyster-beds on different districts of the coast, to the extent of five thousand one hundred and forty-eight acres, amongst which is one for Carlingford Bay; and it appears, by the appendix, that eight additional applications were under consideration. Admirable by-laws have been also framed under the direction of the inspecting commissioner; amongst other regulations, prohibiting the removal from a bed of any oysters of less than fixed dimensions; and as parliament has recently sanctioned the appointment of English commissioners, it is desirable that similar salutary provisions should be extended to the oyster-bearing coasts of Great Britain.

With a view to the extension of the culture, the first step that suggests itself is, that the inspecting commissioner, who has devoted much attention to the subject, should be deputed to examine the modern system adopted by our neighbours, the French, and report on its results; and if that report shall sustain the accounts which have reached us, the British public will then have from an authorised source all the information necessary to enable oyster-parks to be laid down on the most approved principles, in such available districts of our coast as promise abundant supplies and remunerative returns. If it shall be found that the fresh water of springs enriches the saline beds, artificial means can be devised for its diffusion; and if the practice of laying fascines shall prove effective, it may, perhaps, dispense with the slovenly and destructive process of dredging. The pearl-diver of Ceylon descends to fill his basket with oysters without any implement but a sinking-stone to accelerate the rapidity of his descent; and the only precaution to which he resorts, is the mystic ceremony of the shark-charmer, whose exorcism is believed to be always recognised and respected by the sharks. Divers on our shores need not apprehend such intruders, and as the modern invention of Deane's diving-helmet enables the wearer to remain at his ease for five or six hours under water, it would seem that its application to our oyster fisheries might enable the full-grown oysters to be selected and assorted, while the immature remained undisturbed.

TEN TERRIBLE DAYS.

In the year eighteen hundred and sixty-one, about thirty vessels laden with wheat were consigned to England from California. In that wonderfully luxuriant country the harvest had been more plentiful than usual, and merchants were adventuring it in shiploads to all parts of the world.

I, a woman, who am about to tell the true, unvarnished tale of the most terrible ten days of her life, was going to England at that time with my only child, a little girl of four years old, and, being in delicate health, a long sea voyage in a sailing vessel was thought better for me than a berth in one of the ill-ventilated and over-crowded steamers then and still running between San Francisco and New York viâ Panama. Thus I became a passenger for Liverpool in the David Brown, a large American clipper, distinguished for size, cleanliness, and the excellence of its passenger accommodation.

The only fellow-passengers to whom I need allude were a lady from British Columbia, whom I will call Mrs. F——, wife of a major in the British army. She had with her two children and a female servant. I had known this lady previously, in Vancouver Island. We were friends, therefore, at once.

On the eleventh of October, 'sixty-one, the beautiful vessel, laden with her two thousand tons of grain, slowly and gracefully sailed out of the noble bay of San Francisco. Dear friends were standing on the wharf; the bitter partings were over. The sun was shining as it always does in California, until the sea, and the rocks, and the vast city, seemed literally glittering with sunlight. One long look back to the happy home of the last six years, to the home still of the husband and brothers obliged to remain behind, and at last I had only the sea that parted us to look at through my tears. Our friends had seen us set sail in what seemed a gallant ship. It had been chosen from all others as the one to send us home in for its show of perfectness. There were men in San Francisco who knew that the ship was unseaworthy (having been frightfully strained in her last voyage to China), and that she was in no fit condition to be trusted with the lives of helpless women and children, yet they let us sail without a word of warning.

Poor Mrs. F—— and myself had not been two days at sea before we found out what a frightful mistake had been made in the choice of a sailing vessel as our home for the next three months. We were so miserable, that at last, like two school-girls, we kept a list of all the days on a slip of paper, notching them off at night with glee because another day was over.

When we had been a week at sea the ship was hove to one day. There was a small leak, which the carpenter tried to repair, but, I suppose, ineffectually. The captain made light of it, and we had no fear, never thinking it probable that this small leak was a warning of the utmost peril. Often the vessel was stopped for the same small leak, but if we made inquiry we were told there was no cause for fear, and did not fear.

For, except these short pauses, the ship sailed gallantly on, we had lovely weather, and the captain really thought to make a quick and profitable passage.

We rounded Cape Horn on a lovely summer day (our winter being its summer), and the little Cape pigeons were flying around us continually, to the great delight of the children. About this time the second officer caught an albatross for the amusement of the ladies and

children, but the untimely fate of the "Ancient Mariner" having taken strong hold on the captain's imagination, the bird was immediately thrown into the sea, and the officer got a severe rebuke for his temerity. We passed along the coast of Brazil, and were so near Pernambuco that we could see the lights in the houses and hear music from shore. And then the captain said that the next land we should see would be the long low shores of Ireland.

On the night of the fourth of January, 'sixty-two, we had been eighty-six days out, and, in ten more, we thought to be in England.

Our little ones were fast asleep in bed, and we had been on deck for a few moments watching the stir of angry waters, for the heavens looked dark and threatening, and the sailors prophesied a stormy night.

We had not been below in the saloon for many minutes, when there was a little son born to one of the passengers. We all did what we could for the poor mother, but there was no doctor on board, and, as all the other children awoke with the unusual noise and bustle, we were nearly deafened with their screaming. The wind, too, increased in fury, and the ship rolled till we could not stand.

Half frightened at the roaring of the waters, and deeply impressed with the new responsibility of having this poor sick woman and her helpless baby to take care of, we went reluctantly to bed. My own little one had again fallen asleep, and, after gazing at her long and earnestly with some vague unacknowledged fear, I at last fell into an uneasy restless slumber.

I remember waking once, and seeing the captain quickly pass with his charts in his hand, when Anita said, "Oh, mamma! what noise is that?" True enough, the noise on deck was awful, for the wind and the waves seemed lashing the ship to madness; but the child fell asleep again, and I lay half asleep, when suddenly I heard a voice calling my name in quick sharp tones. Starting up wildly, I saw at my cabin door the trembling figure of Mrs. F——, her face white with fear, her eyes distended with horror. My own teeth chattering with fright, I asked her what was the matter. "Oh, we are going down," she said. "The ship is sinking!" Husband, mother, brothers, sisters, came to my thought in that instant with a fearful agony of yearning. My child, my only one, was asleep beside me. Wildly I stooped and kissed her, for I thought at that first moment there was no hope, and that, foundered at sea, we were going down rapidly. The child slept on, and I hushed my breath to listen. Stand I could not, for the ship was rolling frightfully, and every few moments a great wave would dash with remorseless force against her sides, making her shake and quiver again. Mrs. F—— had gone with her two little ones into the captain's cabin. Awaking my child, I hastily dressed her and myself in the first bits of clothing I could find, and joined my friend. The small leak had at last burst into a large one, and the ship was filling rapidly. We remained, till dawn, shivering and shaking below, for by keeping the three pumps at work, and lightening the vessel of her heavy cargo, the captain meant to save her if he could.

At dawn, taking my little girl by the hand, I went on deck. The storm had in some measure abated, but the sea looked black and sullen, and the swell of the vast heavy waves seemed to mock our frailty. The sailors had been up all night, and were as men playing at some ferocious game; some working in desperation at the pumps, and singing at the pitch of their voices wild sea-songs to time their common efforts; others employed in throwing hundreds of bags of grain into the sea that they might thus lighten the ship. This I think, more than all, showed me our peril. I wandered about too miserable to remain in any one spot, till the captain assembled us all once more in the cabin to get some food, saying that it was impossible to save the ship, and that we should have need of all our fortitude. I remember my own vain attempt to eat some bread, but the poor little children took their breakfast and enjoyed it.

We were then each provided with a large bag made of sailcloth, and were advised by the captain to fill it with the warmest articles of clothing we possessed.

All my worldly possessions were on board, comprising many memorials of dear friends, portraits of loved ones I shall never see again, and my money loss I knew would be no trifle. In perfect bewilderment, I looked around, and filled my bag with stockings and a couple of warm shawls. On the top of a box I saw a little parcel that had been entrusted to me by a lady in California to deliver to her mother in Liverpool. I put that in my bag, and she got it. I then dressed myself and the child in as many things as we could possibly bear, for I thought of the cold drenching nights, and shuddered when I looked at that only little one on whom rough winds had never been allowed to blow, the idol of her parents' hearts, so fair and delicate, who must now venture out in a frail boat on the wide stormy sea. I uttered a wild prayer to God for her, full of sobs and anguish, with tears that don't come often in a lifetime, and then there followed a dead calm, in which I saw every minute detail of the scene about me. There had been no thought of removing the breakfast, and with the rolling of the ship, which was every moment becoming worse, everything had fallen on the floor, and was dashing about in all directions. Boxes, water-jugs, plates, dishes, chairs, glasses, were pitching from one end of the saloon to the other. Children screaming, sailors shouting and cursing, and loud above all there was the creaking of timbers, and the sullen sound of water fast gaining upon us in the hold of the ship, which groaned and laboured like a living thing in agony.

Poor Mrs. F—— was in a terrible strait at this moment. Her little boy was discovered helping himself out of the medicine-chest, particularly busy with the contents of a broken calomel bottle. How pale she looked with her poor

little baby in her arms. If I remember aright, we made the boy drink some lamp oil as an emetic. At any rate, he survived the calomel. And now the first mate, upon whose decision and firmness much depended, having lost his presence of mind, had drunk deeply of whisky. He was intoxicated, and so, too, were many of the sailors, who had followed his example. What was to become of us with a fast sinking ship and a parcel of drunken men for our protectors? The captain had been busily employed in ordering out food and water to supply the boats, collecting his ship's papers, examining his charts, &c. The lowering of the boats he had entrusted to his officers. On hearing of the drunkenness on deck, his first thought was to get the women and children off at once, for should the sailors seize the boats, what would become of us? Two boats had already been smashed whilst lowering them into the sea, and there were only two remaining. Forty-seven people to cram into two frail boats, fifteen hundred miles from land. Delicately-nurtured women, helpless children, drunken and desperate men.

The captain and the second officer (a Scotchman from Greenock) behaved admirably at this time. By the help of the most sober of the sailors, the captain's own boat was lowered; some small mattresses, pillows, blankets, a cask of water, sacks of biscuit, and nautical instruments necessary for the captain's use were first put in; then we were let down by ropes. It seems marvellous, when I think of it now, that in our descent we were not dashed to pieces against the ship's side. We had to wait for each descent a favourable moment whilst she was leaning over. Then the word of command was given, and we were slung down like sheep. My heart stood still whilst my little one was going down, and then I followed. It was a terrible sight for a woman to see that poor creature whose baby was born the night before, looking like a corpse in a long dressing-gown of white flannel, with the poor little atom of mortality tightly clasped in her arms. I thought she would die before the day was over.

At last we were all in the boat; four women, five children, the second mate, and sixteen sailors. The captain stayed on the ship, providing for the safety of the drunken creatures who could not take care of themselves, and then he joined us. How small our boat looked by the side of that large ship! And we had to get quickly out of her reach, for she was rolling so heavily that the waters near her boiled up like a maëlstrom.

The chief officer, three passengers, and the remaining sailors, were still on board the David Brown when we left her. I suppose they were soon in their boat, for they overtook us some hours after.

It was no light trial to look at that once beautiful ship, left to her fate in the stormy sea, with all my little treasures in her, for the waters to close over. Yet still how little was the worth to me of everything she contained in comparison with my child. And dark as the future looked, yet she was with me, so far safe and well.

Away we drifted, a mere speck upon the ocean. Before night there came a storm of thunder, lightning, wind, and rain, that lasted through the darkness, and by which we were drenched through and through. I sat up for some twelve or fourteen hours on a narrow plank, with my child in my arms, utterly miserable, cold, and hopeless, soaked to the skin, blinded by the salt spray, my face and hands smarting intolerably with the unusual exposure. When daylight came we all looked wan and lost. There was a faint light in the distance, which we hoped might be a ship's light, but it proved to be on board the other boat, with its now sobered crew. For three days we kept in sight of each other, but the third day we parted company, and saw them no more.

During the storm and confusion the greater part of our biscuits had been soaked with salt water and made useless. It was also discovered that the food collected for the captain's boat had been thrown by mistake into the other, therefore it was necessary at once to put us on allowance; half a pint of water, and half a biscuit a day to each person. Except the biscuit, there were only a few small tins of preserved strawberries and Indian corn, and these were given to the ladies. How the poor children cried with hunger as the days dragged on! Think what it must have been to the mothers to hear children delicately nurtured sobbing ravenously for a piece of bread or a drink of water, craving for it all day, falling asleep whilst asking for it, awaking in the night with the same heartrending cry, and the broken-hearted mothers utterly powerless to satisfy them. I felt desperate, mad, at that time. I would have flung myself thankfully into the waves, if by so doing I could have procured bread for my child.

For the first two or three days we were full of hope that we should meet a ship, and consoled each other by labouring to make light of our difficulties. Yet had it not been that we were shipwrecked in warm latitudes, we could not have saved our lives.

The boat leaked from the beginning, and the sailors by turns baled the water out in little cans. Thus we were continually lying or sitting in salt water. The part of the boat set apart for the women and children was amidships, and about seven feet square. There we always remained huddled together from sunset to sunrise, when we had to leave our places, and in the daytime stow ourselves anywhere to give the men room for their rowing.

Exposed to the glare of a tropical sun for hours together, nearly mad with thirst, bearing my child in my weak arms, for she was too much exhausted to stand, there was a feeling of burning, sickening heat on my brain, and the horrid disgust for everybody and everything around me was almost more than I could endure. I never shed any tears. Often I would sit for hours

without any thought at all, vacantly gazing on the ocean.

We had three days of dead calm. The sun glared down upon us pitilessly, and I thought how pleasant it would be to throw myself into the sea, and sink calmly to death beneath its waves. I lost all wish to live—for life seemed horrible. I cannot describe the days as they passed, separately one by one. When I look upon them they all seem to have been one misery. I remember that on the third day out poor Kitty's baby died—indeed, it had been dying from the first. It never had a chance of living, for it had no fit attention and no sustenance. The poor mother cried bitterly when at last it became cold on her bosom, but its death was a merciful release. Wrapped in a shawl of bright colours, it was thrown overboard, but was so light that it could not sink, and floated for hours on a sea so calm in the hot sun that scarce a ripple could be seen. At last it disappeared suddenly, the prey of some hungry shark, and when afterwards the horrid monsters crowded round our boat they added to our misery. Hitherto the children had been plunged into the sea every morning to preserve them in health, but we dared not continue this practice with those horrid creatures on our lee. Every evening, before the sun went down, a sailor was sent to the top of the mast to look out. But every evening he reported no vessel in sight, and again and again the sun set on us without hope. Then we had nights of drenching pitiless rain, for we were now in the region where squalls come up with great fury. The sky suddenly becomes dark, and a quick sharp wind arises, herald of a rain-storm. When travelling by the steamers in these latitudes the captain calls out, "There's a squall coming; ladies better go below," upon which there is a great rushing and collecting of books and shawls, and in a few moments the decks are deserted, while the passengers, peeping out of the windows, rather enjoy the little excitement. Very different was our case, for we could only watch the storm gathering in the distance, and know that we had to lie there to be drenched through, and to dry again under the blazing sun, half a dozen times in a day, and at night to have the same trouble, only aggravated by the darkness.

From this cause, and the incessant contact with salt water, which continually leaked into the boat, the delicate skin of the women and children became frightfully irritated, and in the total absence of fresh water this irritation produced sores. Ah me! What a horrid thing it was to be literally surrounded by water, soaked through with it, our eyes aching with the sight of it, and yet longing with unutterable agony for a draught of it to quench our burning thirst, or to wash our smarting blistering skin.

One night when it was raining heavily I tried the experiment of lying down with my mouth open to catch a few stray drops, but a huge wave came dashing along and burst full upon us, pouring down my throat and almost choking me. It was cruelly salt and nauseous.

I would sometimes fall asleep from pure exhaustion, only to wake with a shuddering start at feeling something on my face. I would put up my hands in a fright and find my face covered with the dirty wet feet of a sleeping sailor. Then I would push them away with my small amount of strength, but that made no impression. Then I would say, "Oh, please take your feet away," and a heavy snore or a curse would be the only answer. The frightful amount of cursing and swearing common among the sailors at a time when every day seemed likely to be our last, filled me with horror and amazement.

I must not forget one incident, trifling in itself, but which might have caused the death of one of the sailors. On the day of the wreck I had caused two or three bottles of ale and one of claret to be put in the boat, thinking it might be of great use to us. On the third or fourth night out, when we were shivering helplessly after a drenching shower of rain, we thought that a bottle of ale should be opened for the women and children, but not a bottle of any sort was to be found. The rage of the captain was awful. "Who amongst the sailors," cried he, "could be so base, so cruel, as to drink the ale belonging to one of the ladies, and put on board expressly for the suffering women?" For some time the thief could not be discovered, but at last one of the men told who was the delinquent, and then the captain, in his wrath, said that the man who could be guilty of such meanness at such a time was worthy of death, and should be thrown overboard. And the decree would certainly have been executed, had not Mrs. F—— and myself implored the captain to spare the man's life. After many prayers on our part he consented. I do not know whether the man was grateful or not; certainly he never said that he was. I mention this incident to show how men take the law into their own hands at a time of great and common peril.

Every day now increased our suffering; the hunger of the children was frightful, and when the water was served out they would fight for it with their little hands, and often upset it entirely in their eager haste to possess it. As the days dragged along, the men looked almost wolfish in their hunger and desperation. And they were hard worked, too, for they had to row night and day alternately. Some of their faces entirely lost their natural expression, becoming wild with hunger and thirst. And then a fearful talk arose among some of the crew, that they might eat the children. But the captain was warned of their plot, and there were brave men among the sailors who had pity for us.

It was on the morning of the tenth day that this frightful thought came into the heads of three or four desperate men, and the captain and a few trustworthy companions had made up their minds to slay the would-be murderers that very night in their sleep. The last and fatal hour of our great agony seemed to be come; but there was pity in Heaven. The evening before, when the sun set in glorious tropical splendour, I kissed my child in despair, because another day had gone and had brought no relief, when

she said, "Mamma, I will pray to God." The little one was only four years old, a blue-eyed, golden-haired creature, with a wondrously fair complexion and innocent face, and the contrast of this pretty thing kneeling in the desolate boat with the wild, haggard-looking men and women who surrounded her, was almost startling. Her prayer was very simple; with clasped hands and trustful eyes raised to heaven, she said: "Please God send a ship." That was all. The hot tears gushed to my eyes for the first time in that boat, and I took her in my almost powerless arms, and we both slept the sleep of exhaustion.

On the morning of the tenth day, about eleven o'clock, some one called out, "A sail, a sail." Wonderful sound! how we started, almost upsetting the boat in our eagerness to see where it was and what it was.

The next question was how could we make her see us? We could see her, it is true, a faint speck on the horizon, but we were so small, such a pitiful little boat, and had no flags, no signals of distress. What if she were to pass us! Frightful thought—to be so near help and yet not to reach it. We hoisted a white towel, and shouted, and tried every means in our power to attract attention. On she came, nearer and nearer, until we could make out that she was a barque. The captain could even distinguish that she carried the Hamburg flag. Why she had her flag hoisted, if she did not see us, I cannot say. Never mind who or what she was. She passed along and left us.

Then curses loud and deep came from the sailors' lips. Then the women looked into each other's faces, and the children cried, and the wolfish eyes of the would-be cannibals were fixed upon us, and I sat still for hours without a word.

Forsaken apparently by God and man, I was trying, with the stupor of despair, and (I think) coming delirium, to meet my fate; and some songs that I used to sing in San Francisco came into my head. The notes would not come right, and I wondered whether such a note was G sharp, or A flat, and the sea looked red and full of specks.

It was a burning hot day, and I was half asleep about three P.M., when again was heard the cry of "A sail, a sail." This time I made a very feeble attempt to look about me, but the captain and his crew were all alert, and a vessel surely was in sight.

On she came, looking so large to our forlorn eyes. Again our towel was hoisted. Would she pass us?

"Let the women and children lie down in the bottom of the boat," roared the captain; "if she sees so many people, she will pass us like that cursed thing this morning."

Down we went breathless.

Nearer and nearer she came, faster rowed our hungry sailors, when there rose a wild shout, "She has stopped!" and surely there she was at rest in the waters, waiting to see what manner of beings we were. "Row faster, my men, and keep down the women and children." Ah! did he think that the sight of us poor women would frighten away that ship? And then the sweet voice of my little one said, "Oh, mamma, God has heard my prayer, he has sent a ship to save us."

Oh, what a lovely afternoon that was when we were saved—such a blaze of sunshine, such blue skies, such a glistening, glowing sea, as if even the treacherous ocean were rejoicing with us. At length we were close alongside of the ship, and saw crowds of human beings clustering about to look at us—dark, swarthy faces, for they were all Spaniards, but full of pity, wonderment, and horror. They took us all in one by one, and when they saw the women and little children they wept. They could not speak our language, and looked upon us with bewilderment, but when I (who fortunately could speak Spanish), kneeling down on deck, said Gracias a Dios (thank God), their tongues were loosened, and there was a flood of questions and crowding round us, with weeping and laughing and shaking of hands. How good were those kind-hearted men! How I thank them all, every one, now as I write, from the worthy captain down to the lowest of his crew. And they brought us bread and wine and water—precious water, how good it was!

Saved at last, when we could have endured no more. Let it at least be permitted to a mother to believe that the prayer of her little one had risen to the Mercy Seat.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XIV. AT GAMRIDGE'S.

IT was very late, or rather very early, and Gamridge's was in full conclave. There was laughing, and there was swearing; bets were laid, and taken, and booked; stories were told; and jokes were created; and scandals were, not covertly buzzed, but openly roared about. There was much sincerity at Gamridge's, towards two in the morning. A few of the dandies were drunk, and their candour was, consequently, comprehensible; but others, older and more seasoned vessels, were quite as sincere, being simply cynical. They did not, perhaps, wear their hearts upon their sleeves, the majority of the possible wearers not being troubled with centres of vitality; but they wore, instead, an impudent glorying in unholy lives, an insolent contempt for all that was good or pure—or stupid—which was the Gamridgean synonyme for goodness and purity; a bold, defiant, almost chivalrous, and completely diabolical pride—pride of birth, pride of rank, pride of person, pride of dress, pride of intellect (there were some fools there, certainly, and they were proud of their folly, and plumed themselves upon their drawl or their lisp), pride, in fine, of the power of doing evil, and of impunity in wrong-doing. When a very vicious man has very good health, he becomes, indeed, the roaring lion, raging up and down, and seeking whom he may devour. It is only when his constitution is impaired, and his limbs grow shaky, that he begins to crawl in the dust, like a serpent, and wind his body round trees, and whisper counsels full of perdition to the silly.

So, most present spoke their minds at Gamridge's. There was no concealment. Everybody was as bad as his neighbour. At two o'clock in the morning there was no need for concealment. In the daytime, at the clubs, at Chiswick, in the parks, at the theatres, you saw the beautiful Gobelins tapestry, marvellous in the minute finish of its work, suffused with glowing yet tender tints. But at two o'clock in the morning, at Gamridge's, the tapestry was turned up and pinned against the wall. You saw the reverse of the picture—you saw what was behind the exquisite work and the glowing tints. A lamentable arras, indeed: full of knots, and loops, and cobbles, and darns, and frayed ends of dirty worsted protruding from a coarse canvas ground.

A roar of acclaim broke forth as Blunt entered the room. He was a great favourite among the dandies. The famous marquis of those days thrust forward his shoulder-of-muttton palm and squeezed Blunt's delicate hand. Francis Blunt, Esquire, was, perhaps, the only frequenter of Gamridge's who kept his mask on at two o'clock in the morning.

The dandies crowded round him, for he had a renown for saying things which, if not brilliantly clever, were at least spiteful, and consequently amusing. But Mr. Blunt was, this morning, in no mood for venting epigrams or retailing scandalous anecdotes. He could ill conceal his preoccupation.

"Is Debonnair here?" he asked.

"Been here these two hours," answered the colleague he addressed, Captain Langhorne, of the Guards. "Been drinking oceans of soda-and-B., and getting very spooney. Mounthawkington says he's in love. I say it's lush."

In the reign of King William the Fourth the aristocracy were not ashamed to use habitually the language of costermongers. In these days, the writer believes, the superior orders never soil their lips with slang terms.

"Will he play?" Blunt whispered to the Guardsman.

"Whom d'ye mean? Mounthawkington?"

"He play? A hurdy-gurdy, perhaps. I don't mean him. He's not worth playing beggar-my-neighbour with; for my neighbour, Mounthawkington, is beggared already. I mean Debonnair."

"I tell you he's spooney. He'd do anything you told him to do. He is the soft and verdant spinach, and sighs for the due accompaniment of gammon. If you stretched a tight rope across the room he'd dance upon it like Madame Saqui—till he tumbled off tipsy. He's game to play anything, from blind hookey up to chicken hazard. He's very spooney, and decidedly sprung."

"Will you see that he doesn't drink too much? Keep him off champagne. It'll drive him mad. Keep him on his soda-and-B. That won't do him any harm."

"Do you want him, then, that you're so very anxious about his precious health?"

"My dear fellow, I want him between this and five in the morning, for as much as ready money and I.O.U.s payable within four-and twenty hours, will give me."

The Guardsman whistled. "You've been hit rather hard, Blunt, lately," he remarked, "and you want your innings, I suppose? Well, Debonnair is as good as another, I suppose. Only don't knock him down as though you were pitching at the pins in a skittle alley. Let him down softly, poor lad. Let him fall on a feather bed."

"Have you so much sympathy for him?"

"Well, he's only a boy, you know. It's a pity to knock him down all at once, because—because, you know, he's young, and there's a good deal more plucking about him—and if you skin him alive all at once, he might get sick of the thing, and turn steady."

"I see. Well, you shall have him when I've done with him. There'll be plenty of pickings left, I'll promise you."

"Deuce doubt you. Do you want any fellow to-night in with you?"

"Thanks, not one. Lord Henry Debonnair and self; that's all."

"And old Nick as double dummy. Well, I've no wish to spoil sport. Good digestion wait on appetite, and luck on both, and a pot full of ready on all three. What do you go in for? The bones?"

"No; not for serious business. We must, for form's sake, have an hour at Crockey's, but the real affair must come off at the count's. I want him at King John, in a side-room, while the rest of you fellows are deep at hazard. Debonnair, how are you, old fellow?"

All this, save the concluding salutation, had been uttered in the discreetest whisper; but, "Debonnair, how are you, old fellow?" was voiced in the bland and cheery tone of which Francis Blunt, Esquire, was an admirable master.

"The Griffin means mischief to-night," Mr. Langhorne, of the Guards, cursorily remarked a few moments afterwards to Lord Claude Mount-hawkington.

"Oh! confound him," replied the dandy addressed, who was a younger son of a poor nobleman, and had been ruined too early: "he always does mean mischief after midnight. He has had me many a time, and for many a thousand. How in the world does he manage it? He plays on the square, I s'pose?"

"On the squarest of squares. A perfect cube. He's the soul of honour, my dear fellow. I'm peckish, and want some oysters and stout." And Mr. Langhorne, of the Guards, passed on.

"Debonnair, old fellow, how are you?"

Lord Henry Debonnair liked to be called "old fellow." He was very young. He was a boy. He had a fair round smooth face, quite innocent and blooming. His russet hair curled about an unfurrowed brow. His blue eyes were cloudless. His pretty lips seemed quite untainted by contact with pollution. How should they be? If the inclinations of his secret soul had been laid bare, the discovery that he was still fond of lollipops, and never passed an apple-stall without longing to pilfer a couple of the rosy-cheeked fruit of the dozing Irishwoman to whom they belonged, might have been made. He smoked, and the act of fumigation made him very sick; but he continued to smoke, almost without intermission, because the other fellows did it, and it was the thing.

It was likewise the thing, in those days, to drink; so Lord Henry Debonnair drank—champagne, Moselle, Tokay, soda-and-B., and not unfrequently the fortifying but stupifying dog's-nose with the friendly cabman, or the enlivening but poisonous Geneva with the convivial gladiator, or affable hanger-on of the prize-ring. It was the thing in the reign of King William the Fourth, to associate with cabmen and pugilists. As Lord Henry's little head was very weak, intoxication, in its most demonstrative form, was of by no means rare occurrence with him; and he had been at least half a dozen times locked up in various metropolitan station-houses, and the next morning fined five shillings. It was the thing to be locked up at night, and banter the police magistrate in the morning.

He had always—from reason's first dawn at least—experienced considerable difficulty in settling, to his own satisfaction, that two and two made four. But he kept a voluminous betting-book, and backed the favourite, or laid against the field, for all sorts of events, double and single, to the extent of some thousands of pounds yearly. He betted as he gambled, as he drank, as he did worse, as he went to prize-fights and cock-fights and ratting matches, as he drove a four-in-hand (he who was hardly out of a go-cart), as he kept race-horses and bulldogs: not because he cared much about those amusements, or those luxuries—for next to lollipops his most pronounced taste was for boiled mutton and turnips, suet-pudding, and ginger-beer—but because it was the "thing" among the "set" to which he belonged. He was very lazy, very thoughtless, and very profligate, because it was the thing to be so, and he had never done, and never intended, any harm to any living creature. Lord Henry Debonnair belonged to a class common enough in the reign of William the Fourth, but whose type in the reign of Queen Victoria is extinct.

Francis Blunt, Esquire, had twisted this young nobleman round his finger. He had passed a silken string through his nose, and led him by it, with perfect ease and comfort to both parties. He was far too clever to toady the young lord. He patronised him. Lord Henry looked up to him, with implicit trust and confidence, as guide, philosopher, and friend. He recognised all the attraction of Griffin Blunt's brilliant depravity. He felt, in his boyish mind, proud to know so experienced a profligate, so cultivated a master of nefarious arts. It was the respect a youngster at school pays to an

oldster. Blunt was too wary to borrow ready money of his protégé. It was not the thing to be in need of a five-pound note. But Blunt obtained the noble name of Debonnair as acceptor, as endorser, or as drawer, to innumerable bills of exchange at all kinds of dates. His lordship was never troubled to part with ready cash when the bills came due. He had only to sign his noble name once more, and so, the interest was paid, the bills were renewed, and Francis Blunt, Esquire, was flush of cash, and would be able even to give Jean Baptiste Constant a trifle on account of his wages. Oh, the wonderful power of paper-money, and how wide-spreading are the wings of Icarus until the wax melts off. Then he comes down plump; as Law did; as Turgot did; as the latest edition of Chevy CHASE will do.

Frank Blunt drew his arm through that of Lord Henry, and soothed, and flattered, and told gay stories to the noble boy he meant to cheat before sunrise, and whose brains he would have been, under any circumstances, glad enough to blow out: believing, as he did, that Debonnair admired his wife too much. Poor boy! Has there not been seen, ere now, a little spaniel puppy dog frisking about in the den of a Bengal tigress? Blunt allowed no trace either of his design or of his resentment to show itself. He was a diplomatic villain, not a melodramatic one. Plunder your enemy first, and murder him afterwards, if there be occasion for it: so ran the cautious current of Francis Blunt, Esquire's, reasoning.

As fate would have it, he was destined, that night or morning, neither to rob nor to kill Lord Henry Debonnair. For, just as the boy and he had quitted Gamridge's hospitable roof, and were mounting the former's cabriolet, en route for Crockey's, two men of mildewed, slightly greasy, decidedly shabby, and unmistakably Jewish, mien, made their appearance in the lamplight, one on either side of the aforesaid cabriolet. A third man, who was older, and shabbier, and greasier, and more mildewed, but not Jewish, appeared, with pantomimic suddenness, at the horse's head.

"Good Heavens, Blunt, what is the meaning of this?" cried Lord Henry.

"It only means," replied the dandy, with well-assumed coolness, but with a very pale face, "that I am taken in execution—arrested, as it is called—for three thousand five hundred pounds, and that, instead of going in your cab to Crockford's, I must take a hackney-coach, with these respected gentlemen, to Chancery-lane.

CHAPTER XV. GETTING UP.

THE morning broke very sadly and drearily to the little child, left, quite alone, at Rhododendron House. The servant-maid, with whom she had been put to sleep, had risen at six o'clock, for her work was of the hardest, and her pabulum of rest infinitesimal. So, when, about half an hour afterwards, the bold sun came hammering through Lily's eyelids, preaching, to old and young alike, that eternal sermon against Sloth, the girl's place beside her being yet warm, but deserted, it is not, I hope, to be taken as a very wonderful event, if Lily began immediately to cry. It does not take much to bring tears from the eyes of a little child. The infant weeps instead of cogitating; and the result arrived at is about as logical in the one case as in the other. Lily's dolour was as yet of no very outrageous kind. It was less a fractious roar than a meek wail of expostulation. Her sorrows dawned with the day: the noontide of misery was to come. She had but a very faint idea of where she was, and a fainter still of how she had come there. Everything was strange to her. Her memory was naturally short. The events of the previous day had been rapid, crowded, and unusual. The upshot was hopeless confusion. So she betook herself to tears. The sun, however, after vindicating his dignity and potency before stirring her up so rudely, seemed to relent. He condescended to console her. He was a generous giant after all, and acknowledged that so tiny a lie-a-bed might urge some plea in abatement of his wrath. There was time—hard and cruel time enough—for Lily to acquire habits of early rising. So, murmuring (if the Sun indeed can sing) that beautiful burden to the old nurse's ballad,

> Weep not, my wanton, smile upon my knee,
> When thou art old there's quite enough for thee,

he, too, began to smile on Lily, and to show her wonderful things. He had a plenteous store, and a rich, and a brave; and the child smiled in his company. The sun's beams dried her eyes. She looked, and saw the motes dancing in the golden rays; the strip of drugget tesselated in a bright pattern, the knobs on the chest of drawers gleaming in the shine. Then, outside, some creeping green plants, stirred by the morning breeze, chose, with a merry furtiveness, to peep in upon her through the panes; and the sun turned them to all kinds of colours. Her mind was yet as light as a leaf: volatile, and carried hither and thither as the wind listed. She laughed, and forgot her little woe, and found herself playing with the pillow, which, to her, speedily became animate, and a thing to be fondled, dandled, chidden, and apostrophised. It is the privilege of very little girls to be able to turn anything into a puppet; as it is of very little boys to make anything into soldiers. I once knew the small daughter, aged three, of a tinker, who nursed, for a whole hour, a dead rat for a doll.

As nobody came, however, and the painful fact of the pillow having no legs, became apparent, and the sun went in (to cast up his yesterday's accounts, may be), after showing, for a moment, his jolly red face at the door of his dwelling, gloom came again to overshadow Lily's soul. The petty horizon was very soon darkened, and the rain-drops began once more to patter. She felt very lonely, very friendless, very

hungry; and though the sun, in his back parlour, hearing her sobbing, looked up from his ledger, and opening a casement drove a lively beam across her bed, she was inconsolable, now, and wept with unassuageable bitterness.

All at once there came a dreadful bell. It must have been made of Chinese gongs, melted down with revolutionary tocsins, fire-alarums, jarring chimes from brick chapels in grim towns of the shoddy country, peals from jails and workhouses, bells from men-o'-war where discipline was rigid, and whose captains were Tartars: the whole hung in the Tower of Babel, furnished with a clapper forged from Xantippe's tongue, and finally cracked and flawed under the especial auspices of Mr. Denison, Q.C. It was a most appalling bell. It elected, first, to creak and groan, and then to emit a frightful rasping clangour that set your teeth on edge, and made your bosom's lord sit so uneasily on his throne as to seem in danger of tumbling off. You could hear the duller sound of the tugging at the rope, and the thud of the outer rim of the bell against the brick wall by the side of which it was hung, besides the persistent bang, bang, banging of the clapper itself. It was a campanile of evil omen, a sound of doom, a most abominable bell—the school-bell of Rhododendron House.

The five-and-thirty boarders in Rhododendron House knew well enough, from long and sad experience, what the bell meant. It signified Get up! Get up this minute! Get up this instant! Get up, you lazy little minxes, under pain of ever so many bad marks, extra lessons, and diminished rations of bread-and-butter! So, sluggishly or speedily, but still inevitably, the pupils proceeded to rise, to dress, and to lave themselves. All of these processes were ill done; and at prayer-time, few of the five-and-thirty were more than half-dressed, half-washed, or half-awake. But they were all there.

To poor little Lily the bell represented only so much deafening noise, mingled with some vague and indefinite menace of she knew not what. It made her cry more than aught else that had previously excited her emotion; and if, at the end of five minutes, or thereabouts, the horrible instrument had not surceased in its uproar, it is not at all out of the range of probability that the terrified child might have screamed herself into a fit.

"Hoity-toity!" quoth Miss Barbara Bunnycastle, entering the room at this juncture, "what's all this noise about? No crying allowed here, Miss Floris. You should have been up and dressed half an hour ago, little one."

She was quite another Miss Barbara Bunnycastle to the young lady who had received Lily the night before. Her voice was sharper, her gait firmer, her manner more determined. She seemed to forget that there were any such persons as parents, and spoke only to pupils. Cake and wine existed no more in her allure; she was suggestive only of bread and scrape and sky-blue. The holidays were a million miles, and ten centuries, away. She was not cruel, only cross; not severe, only strict. She was still the guide, philosopher, and friend of her young charges; but she was, above all, their governess.

Miss Barbara had at first some difficulty in reconciling herself to the gross infraction of scholastic discipline committed by a young lady-boarder, who had not only neglected to leave her couch at the first sound of the "getting-up bell," and apparel herself in her every-day garments, but was also so ignorant of the arts of the toilette as to be behindhand in reaching the dingy corridor, dignified with the name of a lavatory, where the five-and-thirty matutinally fought for the possession of two jack-towels and three squares of yellow soap. Miss Floris was not even competent to hook-and-eye another young lady's frock, or entreat her, in return, to tie her pinafore. What was to be done with a pupil who could not even part her hair, and knew nothing of the proper maintenance of a comb-bag? But, by degrees, it dawned on Miss Barbara that Lily Floris was a very little, little child—a mere baby, in fact—and that there was plenty of time to break her into the manége pursued at the Stockwell academy of female equitation. Even the education of Adelaide and Theodora, those paragons of judicious training, must have had a beginning. Next, it occurred to Miss Barbara that the little one represented so much good money, already paid in her behalf, and that she might be made to represent much more, equally good. Accordingly, bowing to the force of circumstances, she shrugged the shoulders of her mind, and concluded that the affair, although dreadfully irregular, must be made the best of; and, in pursuance of this sage resolve, she condescended to order up Miss Floris's trunk, and to array the new inmate in the garments provided for her. Nay, she even went so far as to take soap and towel in hand, and to frictionise and slouch, in alternate douches and dry rubs, the face and hands of her protégée.

Lily felt more alone than ever. She missed the warm bath, the soft sponge, the soothing words and merry tales, with which her old nurse used to make the ordeal of the tub tolerable. Now, the tub was replaced by the servant-girl's wash-hand basin, a fictile bowl of many cracks, not much bigger than a pie-dish. She was dreadfully afraid—she knew not why—of her instructress; but she could not subdue a stifled sobbing. When, added to anguish of mind, you happen to have some soap in your eyes, it is hard to refrain from lamentation.

Miss Barbara observed the child's grief, and, as she washed her, chid her.

"You mustn't cry," she said, sharply. "It's wrong, and foolish; and, besides, it'll prevent your learning your lessons. Do you know what it is to learn lessons?"

"Ess," replied Lily, who had once or twice essayed to put a doll through a course of

elementary instruction, but, for the rest, had no more idea of lessons than of the Teeloogoo language.

"That's right," quoth Barbara. "You'll have plenty to learn while you're here, I can tell you. Idleness is the parent of vice; and you'd better be dead than a dunce. Above all, no crying—it's wicked. Do you understand me?"

"Ess," replied Lily again, feeling that she was called upon to say something, but understanding about as much of the drift of the query as of the primordial organisation of matter.

"Then, dry your eyes directly. You mustn't look as if you were unhappy. Nobody is allowed to be unhappy here. You're to be brought up under the law of kindness. I've washed and dressed you this morning, and, till you're able to do it yourself, the servant will see after you. I'm not a nurserymaid, understand that. Now, come along."

"Ess," replied Lily again, bewildered between the exposition of the law of kindness, and the soap still smarting in the aqueous humours of her eyes.

"Then, why don't you do as you're bidden?" pursued Miss Barbara, giving a very slight stamp with her foot.

Somehow, Lily couldn't do as she was bidden. She was not naturally rebellious—only dismayed. But, in her helplessness, and with this terrible personage who spoke so sharply and scrubbed so hard, hovering over her, an indefinable feeling of insubordination took possession of her small frame. She was a very tiny leveret to stand at bay; but she clenched her fists, and crammed them into her eyes, and, stammering out, "I won't," sat down in the middle of the drugget; and the rest was inarticulate moaning.

Here was a fine piece of work! The logical Miss Barbara felt that it would be a lamentable dereliction of the law of kindness to have recourse to slapping; on the other hand, the child only responded to commands by more passionate outcries. So Miss Barbara took a middle course, and, seizing the recalcitrant by one arm, shook her.

"Will you come now, you aggravating little thing?" she exclaimed.

The shaking was slight enough; but it was quite sufficient to subdue the aggravating little thing—she, who up to that moment, had never had a finger laid upon her in anger. Miss Barbara had not clutched her with any extraordinary vigour; but she was muscular, and her fingers had left faint red streaks on Lily's baby-flesh. The child looked at these marks, and acknowledged at once the presence of superior will, of irresistible force. An extinguisher descended quickly, and for good, on the flickering flame of revolt. She gave in—rose—suffered Miss Barbara to rearrange her rumpled frock—and very meekly followed her down stairs, clinging to the bombazine skirt of her instructress.

Miss Barbara Bunnycastle had, probably, never perused the famous work on Education written by Mr. John Locke, author of an Essay on the Conduct of the Human Understanding, in which that profound philosopher relates a light-hearted anecdote of a lady—a most affable maternal person, and an ornament to her sex, I am sure—who whipped her little daughter on her coming home from nurse, eight times in succession, in the course of one morning, before she could subdue her obstinacy. "And, had she stopped at the seventh whipping," opines the grave Mr. Locke, "the child would have been ruined." Fortunately, Lily's little outbreak had been got under by the first overt act of coercion. I am not prepared to surmise what the result might have been after eight shakings.

So, down they went, passing through the lavatory before mentioned, when two or three lagging boarders, who had been late in obtaining a hold on the jack-towels and the yellow soap, or were still dallying with the comb-bag, or vainly endeavouring to find eyes for their hooks, fled, half unkempt, before Miss Bunnycastle's face, like chaff before the wind. Then they descended half a dozen break-neck stairs, and leaving a lobby, hung with bags, and cloaks, and playground hats and bonnets, behind them, entered a long low whitewashed room, barely furnished with desks painted black, and wooden forms, and a few maps, and a closed bookcase strongly resembling a meat-screen, and at the upper end of which, at a raised rostrum, sat Mrs. Bunnycastle, with a pile of open volumes before her. She was supported on either side, like her Majesty in the House of Lords, by lower chairs of estate, occupied by Miss Celia and Miss Adelaide Bunnycastle. The English and the French governesses, or "teachers," as they were less reverently called by the pupils, occupied desks at the further end of the schoolroom, and Miss Barbara had a kind of roving commission all over the academic premises, to inspect, to watch, to report, and to reprove. Her eye was everywhere, and her body was in most places.

It would seem that, on this particular morning, the whole pomp and state of the establishment of Rhododendron House had been brought out to impress the new pupil—though she was such a very little one—with a due sense of awe and reverence. It was rarely, under ordinary circumstances, that Mrs. Bunnycastle made her appearance in the schoolroom until after breakfast; and as seldom did more than two of the sisters deign to attend the earliest assembly of the pupils. However, on the first appearance of Lily in the schoolroom, she found herself face to face with the whole dread hierarchy of her future home—to say nothing of the five-and-thirty boarders sitting at their desks, whose gaze appeared to be directed towards Miss Floris with the concentrated force of one eye.

"Don't stare about you so," whispered Miss Barbara to Lily; she had to stoop a long way down to whisper. "Little girls shouldn't stare.

It's an idle wicked habit. Now, kneel down, and be very quiet."

Happily, Lily needed but slender instruction in this last particular. She had been taught to pray. She plumped down on her little knees, and, folding her hands with edifying decorum, bent her fair head, and began to murmur God knows what. Emphatically, He knew what.

There was a shuffling, rustling noise as the girls, at a signal, rose from their desks to kneel upon the forms. Then Mrs. Bunnycastle read prayers in a mild bleating voice, taking care to pronounce "knowledge" with an omega. After the orthodox orisons, she read a lengthy homily from a thin dog's-eared book, which, according to a tradition among the girls, had been written by a dean, who was Mrs. Bunnycastle's grandpapa. The homily was full of very hard words, and, consequently, most wholesome and improving; but its arguments seemed to have a directer reference to some bygone theological controversies than to the immediate spiritual wants of the five-and-thirty boarders. However, there was a beautiful passage about the idolatries of Rome—which Mrs. Bunnycastle, according to diaconal precedent, scrupulously pronounced Room—and the homily was accompanied by at least one gratifying circumstance, that everybody seemed very glad when it was over. The girls, who had joined in the responses to the prayers with great zeal and apparent zest, and in divers degrees of shrillness, now rustled and shuffled into their places again, and Mrs. Bunnycastle proceeded to promulgate divers bills of pains and penalties, in the shape of lessons and bad marks for offences committed between the setting of the sun on the previous evening, and the rising of the same that morning; and then, when one young lady had broken into a dismal howl at being condemned to learn by heart a whole page of Télémaque, and another had been relegated to the penal study of a cheerful genealogy in Genesis, and a third had seen the prospect of the after-dinner play-hour dashed from her lips by the stern behest to copy out thrice the verb Se Désobéir, and when all the inculpated young ladies had vehemently denied the sins of omission and commission imputed to them, and when the governesses appealed to had emitted lava floods of crimination and recrimination, and when Mrs. Bunnycastle had rapped her desk several times in a minatory manner, with the dean's volume of homilies, and somebody's ears had been boxed—for the law of kindness did not exclude some occasional commentaries and marginal references of a sterner character—the cook of Rhododendron House who, to all appearance, had been lying in wait below till the climax of shrill outcry and uproar should be reached, suddenly burst upon the assembly, not in person, but vicariously, by ringing the bell for breakfast. A very hot person was the cook. She would bend over her saucepans in the kitchen till she attained, as it seemed, a red heat, and would then rush up stairs into the playground, and tug at the bell till she was cool: thus triumphantly vindicating the principle of counter-irritation.

THE RUPEE TO THE RESCUE.

There is an awful state of things in India just now. People are making more money than there is money to make, and payment is becoming impossible. This, I believe, is the real meaning of the "commercial crisis" which has for some time past been threatened in the three presidencies. Trade never was in such a flourishing condition. Given, a pretext of any kind of plausibility, and a capitalist is at hand. You need not go for him to business haunts. He may be found anywhere—in clubs or hotels, encountered at street corners, or picked up at the band. Opium, tea, cotton, castor oil—native produce of all kinds, even to unfortunate indigo—nothing comes amiss to him. "Europe goods," for whose numbers legion is no name, find speculators equally abundant. And such has been the high pressure of transactions for many months past, that an explosion would have been inevitable long since, but for the safety-valve of that glorious invention — limited liability. During the past year limited liability has been quinine, cooling diet, and ice to the head of the commercial fever. Companies accordingly have been formed for every conceivable purpose — to develop resources or to create them: to supply existing requirements or to make wants nobody ever thought of by providing means for their gratification. Old worlds of speculation, in fact, have been exhausted, and new ones imagined, simply because men must find something to do with their money. As a last resort, the private business of individuals has been turned into "fields," wherein hundreds could find space for kicking up their superfluous heels. Your tailor, whom you have hitherto treated as an individual, sends you in your new bill, and your old one too, it may be, not to mention your middle-aged one, as "The Asiatic Clothing Company, limited," and instead of one creditor you find you have five hundred, with a collective capacity to be paid which there is no resisting. Your bootmaker — in whose small account are some trifling items for saddles and silver-mounted harnesses — develops in a similar manner, and "The Cape Comorin and Himalaya Leather Company, limited," reminds you of your past liability and solicits future favours. The livery-stable where buggies and horses are let out to the vehicleless and studless ensign, expands in a similar manner; and the other day there were in Calcutta companies to supply every possible want of the public, even to the cutting of your hair and the shaving of your chin.

Everybody said that it could not last. But while it did, they made their fortunes, and after them the deluge, of course. Well, the deluge has not quite come, but a sufficient amount of cold water has been cast upon the market to

swamp some very respectable people, as well as some others who were not quite respectable, and to make a great many others, more or less respectable, as the case may be, shake in their limited liability shoes. The fact, indeed, has become apparent. Everybody has plenty of money. Everybody's name is worth any amount, or should be so. Everybody's paper is irreproachable, as far as his real capacity for meeting it is concerned. But, irreproachable as paper may be, people will not go on taking it for ever. The representative is beyond question, but the original must be forthcoming occasionally, just for the look of the thing. The original is precisely the difficulty, for rupees are not to be had. The case is something like this: We have most of us seen or heard of a card-party at which coin somehow gets scarce. It must be somewhere, for it was in circulation at the beginning of the play; but everybody says he has lost. If the players are not sufficiently hardened to write cheques, the play must come to an end. This is very nearly what is threatened in Calcutta, and more or less at the other presidencies—where even paper is now beginning to fail. Where are the rupees? is the question asked on all sides.

The fact is, that the currency, which was sufficient for former requirements, is altogether inadequate for the present. Before the development of India from a private speculation conducted by a Company (how devoutly some of its members wished that they could have enjoyed limited liability!) to a grand Imperial concern, open to all comers, with the assurance that laws were just, that property was secure, that protection of every kind was obtainable, there were enough rupees, and to spare, for all purposes. But times have changed, and not only persons, but things have changed with them. We have seventy-two thousand British troops in India instead of thirty thousand as of old, all having daily wants which must be mainly supplied in the country. The native army, though greatly reduced, still exists to a considerable extent, and even the proportion of natives who would have been employed under the old system must live somewhere. We have railway engineers, contractors, and general employés, amounting to a considerable number, who were never heard of in the old days. We have merchants, speculators of all kinds, shopkeepers, and miscellaneous persons attracted by the hope of employment, increased and increasing in numbers, to an immense extent. We have shipping at all the ports in an augmented proportion, requiring stores, and giving a permanent addition to the shore population. All these various classes have contributed to give a stimulus to trade, which, once comparatively stagnant in the interior for want of communication, is now opened up by the railways which stretch on all sides to the sea. The steady demand for tea, and the sudden rush for cotton, have alone given an impetus to commerce, calculated to create unexpected conditions. And to meet all these requirements there is nothing in the way of currency but the old original rupee.

Another cause has also contributed to make the rupee the scarce article which it is just now. The enterprise and energy of our countrymen have produced a state of prosperity which reflects upon every class of natives. The cultivator, the artificer, the labourer, all command better prices or better wages than hitherto. The majority of them not only supply their wants, but save money. The fact is very gratifying, but it is a source of some inconvenience. For the lower class of natives (to say nothing of the higher classes, who hoard in great heaps, both money and jewels, sometimes for political purposes) have no idea of saving money, except in specie. They do not understand investments; they have no belief in bankers' accounts; and it is whispered that this want of confidence, always strongly marked among them, has been further increased by the idea that peace is not a very certain article to invest in, and, that in the event of another revolt, it would be more easy to draw cheques than to get them paid. At the best of times the currency in India is not treated with the same respect as in this country. There, if a man wants any gold ornaments, he very likely gets some of the old gold mohurs from the bazaar, and hands them over to a workman who will make them up in any form he pleases—bringing his little furnace into the verandah if required, and executing the work on the spot. The native jewellers themselves frequently employ the same coins, and the arrangement has this advantage—that the material is absolutely without alloy. The natives disdain ornaments which are not manufactured of the purest metal, rejecting even the British sovereign, for such purposes, with contempt; and Europeans who have become accustomed to the productions of (say) Delhi or Cuttack, share the prejudice, and decline to be victimised by the concoctions of their countrymen, which look very pretty, but are not worth a tenth of their cost, whereas native jewellery is worth, at any rate, what it will weigh. But the gold mohur being no longer in circulation, the native is not tempted to tamper with it or hoard it up.

The case is different as regards the rupee. This is the regular circulating medium, and when Ram Chunder or Nubbee Bukhsh has any of its representatives to spare, he takes care to keep them in a tangible form. If given to ostentation, he has them made into bangles for himself, his wife, or his children, whom fashion allows to wear such articles in any number, so that the whole family may go about their business every day jingling their united capital to the envy of less fortunate neighbours. But it is evident that, whatever fashion may say, a man's wealth may get too considerable to be easily carried about, and moreover it is dangerous to invest it in very young children, who are continually being murdered by admirers of their ornaments. The more prudent, therefore, keep their savings in coin, and as they seldom live in houses with doors, they generally dispose of such savings by burying them in the ground. In this manner a large proportion of

this currency is always kept out of circulation, and this proportion, owing to the prosperity of the last two years, must have enormously augmented. Thus it is that as the rupee has increased in demand it has diminished in supply, by the most natural consequence in the world.

A government has always one brilliant idea to fall back upon—when there is not money enough, to make more. But this is not always the desirable remedy, and in the case of India it is acted upon as much as may be. The Mint does its part in the matter—the rest is a question of raw material, and this raw material is unfortunately becoming scarce. A few years ago the world produced annually about ten millions sterling of silver, and only four or five millions of gold. A silver standard and currency was then of some advantage in India, which has for many years been the "sink" of silver, attracting it from all parts, to the considerable inconvenience of Europe, where it is rapidly becoming scarce. The five-franc piece has been for some time past a rare object in France, and "change for a sovereign" at the present time is far more difficult to obtain in England than the sovereign itself. The cause is simple enough. While the production of silver has remained stationary, that of gold has increased, and the proportions are now reversed. Instead of ten millions of silver and five millions of gold produced in the year, we have now ten millions of silver and twenty-five millions of gold. It is therefore contended by a large party in India that a change in the currency is imperatively demanded. The necessity for such change appears from the simple fact here stated, but the question, like most others, has two sides to it, and these it may not be unprofitable just now to compare.

In favour of things as they are, the case stands something like this. The question is not between the relative advantages of a silver and a gold currency, but resolves itself into this—whether, having a silver currency, it is desirable to change it to a gold one? Macculloch and Mill have not considered that either metal has an advantage over the other in the abstract; and Wilson and Laing, while proposing a change, have shrunk from carrying it out. In countries where the currency has been to some extent altered from silver to gold, the alteration has been made for the sake of convenience, and the standard has been in no way interfered with. In such cases, paper has been largely employed, and where there is a proper degree of public confidence, this resource is always found sufficient. With regard to the argument that a gold currency in India would check absorption, it is contended that the native who has a turn for secreting silver would have nothing to do but to save his small pieces of that metal and turn them into gold. He could then secrete his savings with greater impunity than ever, they being in a smaller compass. In the next place, it is doubtful whether silver is really becoming exhausted; and, in justification of the doubt, it is urged that bar silver, which, five years ago, was quoted in London at five shillings and twopence per ounce, was quoted, a month or two ago, at five shillings and three-halfpence. It is true that India takes a large proportion of the silver annually produced, but is that a reason why she should voluntarily depress the value of her favourite metal? India is called the "sink" of the precious metals—mainly represented in her case by silver—because, being at present a producing rather than a consuming country, the balance of trade between her and other nations has to be paid by her in specie. Should silver become scarce in other countries, India will take the balance of trade in gold or other commodities, and so silver will be recruited; but this is no reason why she should make any change for herself. Moreover, it is contended that the system of hoarding cannot go on for ever: a sponge will hold only a certain quantity of water, and, after a time, the absorption of silver must cease in the natural course of things.

And, it is further urged, that a change in the currency would be unjust to large classes. The withdrawal from the market of the largest customer for silver would cause the price of that metal to fall. Every holder of silver, the public creditor, the private creditor, the large capitalist, the small capitalist, all would suffer by the change—either by direct depreciation, or by the cost to the country in putting them in as good a position with gold as they were in with silver. The relations in value between property and money, as well as the relations between debtor and creditor, have all been formed upon a silver basis, and these would be all rudely shattered by a change.

The argument that a gold coinage would ensure a more rapid supply of coin to accommodate extraordinary times of pressure, is met by the suggestion that extended facilities be given for coining at the Mint. It is denied, too, that a gold coinage would steady the price of metals; and the very increase which has taken place in the production of gold is urged as an argument why it should not be made a standard, instead of silver, which is unvarying, and subject to no unsteadiness. With regard to the question of convenience, no doubt gold would have the advantage; but it would be principally appreciated by the English: the natives of the country have no grievance upon that head.

On the other side, it is urged that the enormous increase of trade which has taken place in India during the last few years cannot possibly be accommodated to the existing currency, and that the present drain of the metal, if allowed to proceed, must not only be highly injurious to that country, but to every other. The amount of metal annually produced has not increased for years past. The chances are, that it will become exhausted; and even should it partially fail, the currency, not only of India, but of all nations possessing a silver standard, must be greatly affected, and prices in consequence become violently depressed to adjust the balance. On the other hand, a resort to gold is invited by

the enormous increase in the production of that metal made within the last few years; gold, moreover, being obtainable cheaply from adjacent countries, whereas silver must be brought from a distance at a large expense. By the proposed change, it must also be remembered, not only would sufficient silver be left for general purposes of currency, but any excess in the production of gold would be exhausted, and a healthy balance preserved between the two. It is the silver currency which causes India to be the "sink" of the precious metals, for she can do nothing but absorb it, seeing that it can be exported only at a loss. And this notwithstanding that in consequence of her own overgrown demand for silver, India cannot obtain it unless burdened with at least ten per cent of charges beyond its value in Europe. Under a gold standard India, instead of being the last country to receive the metal of which her currency was composed, would be the first; for, whereas silver comes to her now from long distances, gold would come to her then from close at hand. At present Australia has to send her gold to England to purchase silver before she can buy Indian commodities. The "prohibitive currency," as it has been called, thus shuts out India from commercial intercourse with neighbouring countries, and cannot but tend to cripple her interior development. Under the change proposed, India, instead of being the absorber of silver, would be the distributor of gold. The ten per cent of charges upon the one metal would be reduced to some two or three per cent of charges upon the other; so that money would be obtained, not only relatively cheaper with regard to price, but materially lower with regard to charges. Money being cheaper, other commodities would be cheaper also, and India would have a standard at once convenient and cheap, instead of cumbrous and dear, as under the present system.

The argument that the change cannot be effected without breach of faith to the public creditor, and prejudice to contracts made under a silver currency, is met by the rejoinder that government, in borrowing money, gives no pledge, direct or indirect, that no reform of the financial administration shall ever take place, and that in all cases of public contract the understanding must be the receipt of an equivalent amount under the standard which regulates value at the time of payment. This was the course taken by the government of England in adopting the gold standard in 1816, and though there existed at the time a far greater public debt, and a currency at least equal to that of England, the change was made without question or complaint. If a gold standard were now adopted, it is impossible that depreciation could take place before the expiration of the guarantee on existing loans, which is all we have to do with at present. It is estimated that the world requires about eighteen millions sterling of gold per annum to supply her existing wants. If, in addition, there be a demand from India equal to her present demand for silver, say twelve millions sterling, there would be an annual consumption of thirty millions. Considering that the present production of gold is about twenty-five millions yearly, it is clear that unless very extraordinary circumstances arise, the value of the metal must be obtained, and it is at least as likely that the present mines may be exhausted as that new ones will be found.

The idea that a gold currency would be unpopular with the natives, is combated by the fact that there is a growing tendency towards the change, unrecognised by law. India shows her appreciation of intrinsic value by largely importing the most precious metal, although it is not a legal tender, and gold bars, bearing the stamp of the Bombay banks, pass in the interior for an equivalent sum in rupees. With regard to the alleged inconvenience of the change, it is suggested that along with gold coins rupees might still continue a legal tender to the extent of five hundred, the limit to be modified, perhaps, as circumstances might suggest. These would circulate as freely, and could gradually, as they were returned into the government treasuries, be replaced by silver token coins, so that the change would be effected almost imperceptibly and without inconvenience to anybody.

The latter suggestion leads to the natural question—Why not have a double standard? Do not interfere with silver, but let gold come in to its relief. Against this arrangement it is argued that the system has been tried in England, America, France, and elsewhere, without success. In England and America silver became so scarce that it was found necessary to introduce a gold standard with a subsidiary silver token coinage; and in France at the present day, where the double standard still nominally prevails, a natural adjustment to a single gold standard is fast taking place, the limited silver currency being so worn and depreciated as to be no longer profitable as bullion. There is, in fact, say the opponents of the system, a principle of antagonism in the double standard which cannot be overcome. The two metals will not harmonise. They are in opposition to each other, and the weaker goes to the wall. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the countries where a single standard is now in force, have not resorted to this measure until it has been proved to be demanded by the working of the double system. It may be well supposed that the people of India would be discontented at the abolition of the rupee by one fell swoop; but were a gold standard introduced in conjunction with it, and they found the rupee more profitable to sell as bullion than to pass as currency, they would scarcely complain of a result so much to their advantage.

With regard to a paper currency, which has for some years been an understood project of government, it is argued, I think, very soundly, that it could be best introduced on the basis of a gold or double standard. The chief legitimate object of a paper currency is to set free capital which, besides being saved from wear and tear, may be profitably employed for ex-

portation. But silver cannot be made reproductive in this manner, for there is nobody who would take it from India at the charges to which it would be subjected. Notes are even now issued to a small extent, and their convenience gives them a certain circulation; but they have not obtained general confidence, and the thorough acceptance of paper money must, in India as elsewhere, be a work of time.

The Bombay Chamber of Commerce has, without committing itself to any specific measure, appointed a committee to draw up a memorial to government on this important subject. That a change will be made can scarcely be doubted; and the probabilities are, that a gold as well as a paper currency will be eventually introduced. As regards a gold standard, there are two sides to the question, as we have seen; but upon this, as upon most other subjects, there are still conservatives in India who would almost justify Benjamin Constant's sarcasm upon Talleyrand —that if he had been consulted concerning the creation of the world, he would have objected to it on the ground that it would destroy Chaos! The case is clear enough—that the old supply of silver is inadequate to the new necessities of the country, and that gold must be brought to its relief. But this is no reason why such an old institution as silver should be swept away, and I am conservative enough to look with apprehension upon the possible abolition of the rupee.

It would be too much like cutting down the pagoda-tree at once, and making money an enemy to be fought inch by inch, according to the sordid European process, instead of a friend, as we have known it in India, to whom you have but to extend your arms to receive it in your embrace; where, if it *does* melt away, it is only in sheer affection. Tell a native that he was to wake up one morning and find no sun, he could scarcely be more astonished than to be told that he was destined to experience a dawn not lit up by the rupee. Fancy a government which has for its great guiding principle "respect for the prejudices of the natives," making such a mistake as this! A decree for the total and immediate abolition of caste could scarcely create more consternation. It is to be hoped, therefore, that, whatever is done in this matter, the rupee will be respected. One has not much respect for it in this country, where you will get only one-and-ninepence for it instead of two shillings, according to a common rate of exchange, if you are heedless enough to bring it home with you; but in India it is a tried and trusty companion, a second nature, which never yet betrayed the heart that loved it in a reasonable manner. If you touch the rupee, too, you touch all the small change—touch the anna, touch the pice, the pie, and even the cowrie. You would never get the present generation of natives to change their minor currency, which has depths, and lower depths, of which the haughty English take no account. The only divisions recognised in ledgers are Company's rupees of two shillings (sicca rupees are something more), and these contain sixteen annas, the annas in their turn being divided into twelve pie. There is also a coin called a pice, the smallest generally in circulation among our countrymen. Four pice are equivalent to one anna, or three-halfpence, but they are not reckoned up in accounts, although circulated for convenience' sake, like the sou in France; the pie in the one case being counted like the centime in the other. In a thorough remodelling of the coinage, I suppose equivalents could be found for these pieces. But there are lower depths, and lower depths still, in the currency of the bazaars, with which it would be more difficult to deal. For minor payments among natives, small white glossy shells are made use of. These are called cowries, and they are reckoned in this manner:

Four Cowries make one Gunda;
Twenty Gundas make one Pun;
Four Puns make one Anna;
Four Annas make one Cahun—

which cahun is about a quarter of a rupee.

A piece of money which cannot make so obviously absurd a thing as a gunda without being multiplied by four, must be of small value indeed. But the gunda is evidently no jesting matter, since it requires nineteen of its companions to help it to make a pun. The pun being made, however, will, it seems, with the assistance of three more, make an anna, which may, therefore, be considered a coin of some jocosity, intensified, doubtless, in a cahun, to a high pitch of humour.

This facetious measurement of value is peculiar to Bengal. In Madras and Bombay there are other varieties which need not be particularised. How these would be treated in the event of a radical change it is not easy to anticipate. I can only suppose that they would be comprehensively let alone. But the effect might easily be embarrassing to a large and low class of persons, who are in the best of times not very easy to satisfy.

Taking all circumstances into consideration, an entire reconstruction of the coinage would be a most inconvenient measure. A double standard may have its disadvantages, but at any rate it would have the merit of creating without destroying—a new financial world might be brought into existence, and Chaos need not be interfered with. If gold and silver under such a régime should have a battle royal, and the rupee have to fight for its life, warning would at least be given of the danger, and men's minds would be familiarised with the change before the contingency became a catastrophe.

A paper currency, as an auxiliary to gold and silver, is much to be desired. In this there can be no hazard, as nobody need take it who had any private conviction of the instability of British rule, or a weakness on the part of the authorities in favour of repudiation. And if government notes gained general acceptance, as they most certainly would, the effect would be, not only to save wear and tear, and to discourage hoarding, but to act as a check upon the imaginations of the large class of persons who are apt to take to disaffection rather by way of a change than

from any strong feeling adverse to loyalty. They would also enable the authorities to materially abridge the amount of specie kept in the local treasuries, which, in the outbreak of 1857, offered so powerful a temptation to the troops. They would, moreover, be a strong inducement to our countrymen to carry money about with them, as many now do in Calcutta, where the notes of the Bank of Bengal are in circulation, and so prevent that habitual running up of accounts which plays all kinds of unpleasant things with limited incomes. But there is no reason why the rupee should not still take the same part in the circulation which the florin is taking in this country, to the exclusion of the old half-crown, and no reason why this advantage should not be retained in conjunction with both a gold and a paper currency.

THREE SIMPLE MEN OF THE EAST.

The following story was heard by its present narrator, in Ceylon:

In Kandy, during the days of the Kandyan kings of the Island of Ceylon, on a pleasant, cool December evening, three strong men were sitting in a rest-house, or amblemmay—that is, a small open building raised for the benefit of travellers by some pious person, in accordance with the saying of Buddha, that the gods reward such works of charity.

As the men sat in the glow of the sunset, a middle-aged widow, in deep mourning, came by. The three men rose and bowed to her. She also made a bow to them.

"That bow was for me," said one of the men. "No," said the second, "it was mine." "No," said the third, "it was to me she bowed." They quarrelled over the matter for some time, but at last agreed that it would be better to run as fast as they could after the widow, and ask her to which of them she bowed. They did so, reached her out of breath, gasped at her their question, and the only answer they got was, "To the greatest simpleton among you."

Then they returned to the rest-house calmly, but only to quarrel again.

"Did I not tell you," said one, "that she bowed to me? I am the greatest simpleton here." "No," said each of the other two, "I am more of a simpleton than you." They quarrelled thus for some time, and, from words coming to blows, they fought till they were stopped by the police, who locked them up for the night in separate cells, and carried them next day before a judge. The judge, having heard the cause of dispute, called upon one of the men to produce evidence for his claim to be so great a simpleton.

"My lord," said he, "when I was about eighteen years old, my father and mother set eyes on a young woman whom they chose to be my wife. They thought she would be faithful, industrious, and thrifty. She was expected, also, to inherit a few fields. She was of the same caste as ourselves, and of good family. Proposals, therefore, were made and accepted, and, soon afterwards, according to the custom of the country, I had to visit my future mother-in-law, at whose house, though not allowed to do so by the strict rules of society, yet, by some contrived chance, my intended wife would show her face to me. I had far to travel, and, starting at mid-day, arrived late in the evening, when I was most cordially received, and most kindly requested to stay for the night, and return home next day. To this I consented, with all seeming reluctance, although it had been the object of my journey, and I was fully persuaded that a glance at my future partner in the cool of the morning, would be better than one in the dusk of the evening. I had an excellent dinner, and slept soundly under a roof which I already regarded as my own. In the morning I awoke refreshed, and went out of doors to wash myself as usual. I found, of course, awaiting me, a brazen pot full of water for washing my face, hands, and feet, as well as a piece of wood charcoal for cleaning my teeth. I finished my ablutions soon, and, on looking back, observed a beautiful young woman, who sat at some distance from me, washing rice for our morning meal. Her embarrassed air, and some smiles which stole over her face almost against her will, easily told me that she was my betrothed; and I, in defiance of our customs, quietly went near, and spoke to her, as there was nobody in sight. She was not so shy as to leave her work and run away, but stayed, and returned short modest answers to my questions. At length, I went very close to her, tapped her on the shoulder, and playfully taking up a handful of the rice she was washing, had just put it into my mouth, when, to our utter confusion, her mother made her appearance. I quickly removed myself to a respectable distance, but had not time to bite or swallow the rice, and so was obliged to keep it between my gums and cheek. This showed as a lump, which my mother-in-law who was to be most unfortunately mistook for a gum-boil.

"'Ah! how are you this morning?' said she. 'You have got a gum-boil.' 'Yes,' answered I, 'but it does not give me any pain at present, so I intend to leave it alone till it forms matter.' 'You should not do that, child,' continued she; 'you should get it cured immediately. I shall send for a doctor.' 'No,' said I, in bitter desperation, 'we have a very good doctor practising near our village. I shall, as soon as I reach home, put myself under his care.' But my evasions and excuses could not baffle her officiousness. The doctor was sent for, and, until he came, she lectured me on the evil of permitting any sickness to come to a head, and now and then she felt my gum-boil. The doctor at length arrived, and he also examined it. He pronounced it to be one of a very malignant sort, but curable. Now, during all this time my officious mother-in-law had her eye on my cheek, and I had committed myself so far that I could not undeceive her. Shame at confession of a falsehood, as well as the fear of exposing my previous indiscretion, alike kept me silent. I sat mute with astonishment at the position to

which I had reduced myself, until the doctor, who had been busy in the kitchen, suddenly came out, and, before I had time to avoid him, put a red-hot iron hook into my gum-boil. I howled and jumped, but he had made a deep wound, and out of it came the rice I had inside. All present now saw the truth, and the doctor picking up the rice, cried at me, 'You big simpleton, when you only had rice in your mouth, why did not you say so?' I made no answer, but took to my heels and ran home. Thus I lost a good wife and the prospect of good fortune, and have ever since believed myself the greatest simpleton yet born."

Having laughed heartily at this story, the judge turned to the second man, and asked, "What evidence have you, sir, of your right to the bow you claim?"

"My story is short," he answered, "but will show that I have as much right to the bow as any man. I married early, and tried to be happy, but found that my wife could not manage the house without help; so I married another wife (polygamy being allowed in my country), and thought that all would be well managed by the two, and I should get my rest after my day's labour in the fields. But, alas, I was mistaken. I had no more rest at home. If I spoke to one wife for a few minutes, the other complained that I did not speak to her. I was not able to bestow on one, the least attention or kindness by deed, word, or even by a look, without suffering from the other's jealousy. Thus I lost all peace at home, and was quite miserable whenever bad weather or any other cause obliged me to stay in doors, and at night I had no sleep; for if I tried to sleep with my face towards one wife, the other complained; if I slept on my back or with my face to the ground, both complained. I was harassed in this manner until I lost my patience, and told them there was only one thing to be done, and that was, they must take me each by a leg and pull away till they divided me between them. I had no sooner spoken, than they took me at my word. They seized me by the feet and began to pull away with all their strength, each trying to outpull the other. In this extremity I could only scream for help. The neighbours rushed in, and I was extricated; but such was the laughing, jeering, and hooting at the simpleton who had thus given himself up to his wives, that I had to fly from my country, and now I am here, a beggar. My countrymen have ever since, even up to this day, spoken of me as the Great Simpleton."

This story having been told, the third man, at the request of the judge, related the following:

"I married, at about the age of twenty, a rich young woman; but, instead of adding to her wealth, by trading, or following some lucrative course of life, I did nothing until our money was all gone. Then, being compelled by hunger, and touched by the position and entreaties of my wife, I went to work. I laboured all the day in a rich man's garden, and with my earnings bought a small quantity of rice and returned home. My wife baked three cakes of the rice, and we sat down to eat them, when a dispute arose between us as to which had a right to two. I said that I ought to get two, as I had toiled all day and earned them all; my wife maintained that she ought to get two, as she had brought with her so much money and had fed me so long, and had, besides, to make and bake the cakes. Both of us were obstinate, and we would by no means consent to an equal division. At length, my wife hit upon a plan. She proposed that we should sit by the cakes, and whoever spoke first should get only one. I agreed, and so we sat up all night without speaking. About daybreak I fell asleep, quite wearied, and so did my wife; but we rose soon, and looked at our cakes, and remained silent. We did not sit much longer in this manner, but both fainted. Shortly after this, our neighbours, seeing our door closed, and hearing no voice or sound of stirring within, came and knocked. As they received no answer, they broke open the door, and found us lying apparently dead, but warm. So, fancying us to be actually dead, they made a pile of wood and placed us on it. Fire was set to the pile, and most unfortunately just underneath me. It burnt the wood on my side of the pile so quickly that the heat roused me at once, and I jumped up with a loud cry of 'Oh!' In the next moment my wife started up and cried, 'Ah, you get only one cake!' Our neighbours were surprised at this performance of the corpses; but when my wife, in great glee, boasted of her victory, and explained herself, they laughed at us uproariously, and told us that we were both of us the greatest simpletons they ever heard of."

The judge settled the claims of the three simpletons, thus: "You are really three very great simpletons, and it is not easy to decide which of you ought to get the bow. The first, however, suffered not only from his folly, but on account of his love, and because he had not observed the approach of the doctor with the red-hot iron hook. The second suffered because he committed a mistake, and his wives took unjust advantage of it. But the third suffered starvation, solely because of his foolishness, and is therefore the greatest simpleton. In the present quarrel, however, all three have been equal simpletons in fighting for so worthless a thing as a passing stranger's bow."

RAILWAY REVERIE.

THE dry tense cords against the signal-post
Rattle, like rigging of a wind-tossed ship;
And, overhead, up staring at the sun,
The scarlet target, duly split in half,
Silently tells that soon the gliding train,
Long-jointed, black, and winding, will glide in
With clamp, and roar, and hiss, and shrieking scream,
Steered by that dusky, stolid, silent man
Who cares not who gets in, or who goes out,
So he but reach his home, and have his meal
With his good wife in quiet. See, the folk
Come faster—trap, and cart, and proud barouche,

Squire, groom, and farmer, old man, youth, and child,
Old dame and maiden—yellow cheek and red;
Rough hearty welcomes, pleasant girlish laughs,
And brave bass voices, chiming in accord,
Mixed with the sound of restless rolling wheels
Suddenly checked; and then the snappish bite
Of ticket-markers, and the rat-tat-tat
Of the quick, restless, subtle telegraph;
And then there came some pretty feathered hats,
With sweet eyes hid in shadow under them,
And stacks of croquet mallets, bows, and shafts,
That make me wish myself a croquet ball,
Still to be trampled on by those dear feet,
Or target to be riven by those darts,
Or, better still, that Jack they praise so much.
And now, as leaning o'er the platform fence,
I look down on the corn-fields round the church,
A strange wild fancy comes as in a dream,
While o'er my head the long wires, like a harp,
Murmur strange secrets not to be divined
By later bards. Suppose, my fancy said,
That death, with all its crape, and mutes, and palls,
Its hearses, mouldy graves, and mossy stones,
And dusty chancel tombs, was done away,
Repealed, annulled; and in its gloomy stead
There reached the doomed man, at the fitting time,
A sable letter bidding him repair,
On such a day, and such an hour, perforce
To such a station, and when he got there,
With kinsmen, friends, and children, and with wife,
At the fixed moment—never failing that—
A supernatural, spirit-driven train
Arrived, in which the same stern inner force
Drove him to mount, waving a calm adieu,
And then, not waiting for more sobs or tears,
The train flew on, threading the tunnel-arch,
Winding round corn-fields, farms, and barley-ricks,
Till in the thicker blue it grew so small,
Then vanished. Thus, as I brooded on,
Up came the northern train, and bore me off
On its swift viewless, airy spirit-wings,
And in a moment rolling seas of gold,
Of brown scorched wheat, rich waving far and free,
High tawny downs, crested with clumps of trees,
The old grey church, the reapers, and the sheaves
Melted to air, and rolling clouds of steam
Compassed me round. And so I dreamed my dream.

A GOLD DIGGER'S NOTES.

On this bright Australian summer's day why should I have anything to do but wander away on some river bank with a gun, or a rod and line, taking rests in shady places, and watching the habits of such live things as one may see? Sometimes a snake gliding through the grass, and lifting his head up from time to time; then a turtle, slowly rising to the top of the water, and paddling away, or basking in one place as he looks about him, and then going down with a splash. Next a kangaroo fly (a fly something like those bright flies that make their nests in the garden walls at home) will pounce down among the flies on one's hand or dress, and carry off a victim; then, some little lizard from under a loose scale of bark on a gum-tree, and of the same colour, will dash out and follow his example. To notice a black band reaching up the same tree, over the rough brown dead-looking bark at the bottom, and up the smooth white bark above, in a wavy line, and at last lost among the big branches at the top, is very amusing. In warm weather there is an endless daily and nightly procession of little black ants, worthy of note both from their incredible numbers in swampy places, and from their horrible stench and taste when crushed. Woe to the man who leaves his bread, meat, sugar, or anything eatable within their reach!

Perhaps after watching these things, one looks up and finds that one has been watched all the time, either by a big guana, motionless on the limb of a tree, or by a pair of eagle-hawks high up in the air, wheeling in their endless circles, as if they were never tired. A mob of ducks next come up the river, following all its bends, and whiz past with straightened necks as they turn off with one consent, on their way to some rushy lagoon close by. Now is the time, down on one's knees, with hat off, gun ready, and dog crawling behind, one creeps up as noiselessly as possible to the belt of rushes which surrounds the lagoon, then rising gradually, has the pleasure either of seeing the ducks swimming comfortably along, out of range, or of getting a raking shot at them, perhaps killing one, and wounding another. When the dog goes for the wounded one, it will swim awhile, then dive. Looking sharply about, one sees the leaf of some water-plant turn on edge, and the upper part of a duck's head and bill appear above the surface. I have known my retriever, Bess, swim for an hour at such times, before I could sight and shoot the duck again.

On my occasional shooting excursions last winter (near Beechworth, Victoria), I saw several birds that were new to me. One, a milk-white spoonbill, about thirty inches in height, and with a bill eight or nine inches in length. They are very handsome birds. I also saw, on the muddy side of the swamp, an ibis, brown with longish black legs, and long curved bill. It stood over twenty-four inches high. The magpies here are different from those in England. There are two or three sorts of them; the pied, which are the commonest, always go in pairs, and make a strange wild sort of whistling, especially before and during rain.

I was looking after a saw-mill the week before last, on a creek about twelve miles from this place; a very lonely spot. I was there for a friend, who had business elsewhere. All I did was to attend at times to the steam-engine, look round the mill to see that all was right, and keep the books. The rest of the day I used to go shooting in the swamps, as most of the bush elsewhere had been burnt. I was boarded and lodged, and had five guineas for the week. The lodging I dispensed with, on account of the fleas, and went to a little distance to a bark hut, where I found an old half-crazy convict hut keeper, who used to spin yarns till I fell asleep on my sheet of bark, and long after, for anything I know. But he swept and watered the hut every day, and I was not eaten up by the fleas.

The scenery in the bush is very striking. The immense gum, stringy-bark, and other trees, of which I do not know the names, are very beautiful with their drooping leaves; but a strange effect is produced by the number of fallen and half-burnt trees, that lie about in all directions. The bush is on fire in a great many places around us. In the daytime we see the smoke, and at night, from fire to fire, it reaches from the north-west round to the east, and from that to the south. The glare in the sky over the fires is a beautiful sight after sunset.

Every one here is praying for rain; none has fallen for months, and without water the diggers cannot wash their dirt, while upon the gold in the dirt the welfare of the place, and every one in it, in a great measure depends. I have been hard at work all day and earned about five shillings. Yesterday I did not earn so much, and to-morrow I may earn much more; so, as I am of a philosophical turn of mind, I come home to my tent and sing "toora loora."

There are many men on these diggings who came to them at the first rush, and have worked hard ever since, sinking shafts from a hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty feet in depth, slabbing them close all the way down, or running the risk of being smashed in them (as several have been), and after all have not earned a sixpence yet.

We always work alternate shifts when sinking, so many hours on and so many off, day and night. Very pleasant it is, on a cold night, to be woke up, and have to jump into the loop of a rope and be lowered a hundred or two hundred feet underground, alighting, perhaps, in muddy water, knee deep, where one must pick, bale, or fix slab, for six or eight hours.

When a man has to desert a claim as utterly unproductive, after seven or eight months of such work, and has to shoulder his blankets without a penny in his pocket, he wants a little of Mark Tapley in him to prevent his getting down-hearted.

The diggings are in a dull state, and must continue so until the weather changes, for which reason, hearing of a job, I went into Beechworth yesterday to apply for a billet as colporteur to the Beechworth Branch Bible Association. I went before a committee, who told me to come again, but as I was not so extensively got up as the nine other applicants, who were clean shaved and black coated, I do not expect to get the four pounds a week and ten per cent on all receipts.

I think that doctors and lawyers do, or can, make more money here than any other profession, but the doctors are almost without exception drunkards. A young man in either profession would be sure to get on at the diggings if *steady*. Brewers appear to be doing well here, and will do better when more beer is drunk instead of abominable brandy.

The publicans drive a fine trade. Most of the public-houses have large dancing-rooms, the entrance to which is free, but *through the bar!* There you may see a score or two of men and three or four girls jumping about to the music of a fiddle and two or three other instruments. It is laughable to see a couple of rough diggers hugging one another as they spin round the room, or perhaps some dapper little fellow, a store-man, or barber, or something of the sort, with his arm round the waist of a big-bearded chap in a red flannel shirt, an old wide-awake, or cabbage-tree hat, and moleskin trousers fastened with a belt, and all of a bright buff colour, caused by his underground occupation, whirling round with the greatest satisfaction and gravity possible. It is the same every day, except that there is no dancing on Sundays, and the tunes are different. I suppose the landlord finds that people can drink to sacred music, though they do not dance to it.

I believe there is a cricket club in Beechworth, but they are sleepy people here about anything of that sort, and like drinking grog better than playing cricket. Working men may do well here. For carpenters and bricklayers there is always plenty of employment at good wages, and there are many other ways of making money if a man is steady and can turn his hand to anything that offers; such as splitting rails, posts, or shingles; stripping sheets of bark for roofs, floors, and sides of houses; carrying water-races across creeks, &c. Many have made a good deal by catching fish and shooting wild-fowl on the Murray and bringing them to the diggings for sale. It would do your heart good to see some of the codfish caught in the Murray, weighing fifty or sixty pounds each. It sells here for from eighteen-pence to half-a-crown a pound.

I do not consider money of much use to a man here, unless he has colonial experience, or is in some settled business from the first, otherwise he is almost sure to lose it. By getting both together, one may be made to help the other.

I have left the diggings, for a while at least, and am now following an entirely different kind of life. I am with a government surveyor, laying out a township, &c., a few miles above Wagunyah. We work eight hours a day, running lines of road through the bush, marking off town and country allotments, and surveying rivers, lagoons, and flats.

Many of the diggings in Victoria are at this time in a bad state, for the greater proportion of emigrants that are flooding into Melbourne, being unable, or unwilling, to find regular employment, start for the already over-crowded diggings, get down-hearted from what they see and hear there, run through what money they have, and at last try to get work at any wages, or set about digging with only their luck to trust to. Old diggers, having experience to back their luck, generally do better. At the present time, the amount of gold found, does not nearly keep proportion to the number of those finding it.

Mr. Sumwun, the "boss," is five inches taller than *I* am, being six feet seven and a half inches

in height, and stouter in proportion. Therefore, in this tremendously hot weather, he likes to take a good many spells under the shadiest of the trees, at which times he gives us accounts of his adventures during the thirty years that he has spent in surveying and exploring different parts of Australia—some ludicrous, some horrible, some incredible.

We are camped on the banks of the Murray, on a paddock of ten thousand acres, most of which will be cut up into lots, varying from a quarter of an acre to eighty acres. Government is now doing something on the principle of "better late than never," by throwing plenty of land into the market, giving the small capitalists a chance, and thus making other openings for a man, besides placing his capital in a public-house or a store. Next week we shall mark out lots on a plain of eleven thousand acres. Mr. Sumwun, hearing me say that I should like to have one of the allotments that we are now laying out, told me I should have any one of them I liked: he buying it, and I paying him as I could. I do not know what sort of a speculation it would be here—doubtful. At Beechworth there are several quarter-acre lots which, bought at the government sales two and three years back for twenty-five and thirty-five pounds each, are now let for from one hundred to three hundred and fifty pounds a year.

From all I have heard, I believe the western districts of this colony to be best for farming purposes, both on account of soil and climate. An insuperable drawback to the land here, is that it is not well supplied with water. We have always had to carry some with us whenever we have gone any distance from the river or lagoons. On the plain that we have just finished laying out, there is not a drop to be had, except by sinking thirty or forty feet for it. There does not seem to me to be enough rain to make this a great agricultural district. I suppose it is drawn off towards the high ranges.

We have had some heavy storms lately, but they do not often last long, and the heaviest generally follow a narrow course, which may be traced for years in the bush by the smashed and up-torn trees all lying in one direction. I have seen but one of those storms in full blow, and that was much too near to be pleasant, for I saw a great many trees shivered by the lightning; there were splinters, from the size of a lucifer-match to the size of posts and rails, covering the ground all round, some being thrown full a hundred yards.

I was down on the Murray the other day, when I saw two platypusses. Their fur does not seem sleek in the water, like a water-rat's when swimming, but loose and open. I often see them with their backs and the tops of their heads just above the water in the river; they remain in one spot in the strongest current for a minute or so, and then dive, and come up again, generally, however, lower down the stream. I noticed many mussel-shells on the banks, which I think must have been left there by them; for if they had been left there by the blacks, they would have been roasted, which they were not. I have sometimes seen layers and patches of cooked shells some feet under the surface of the earth, at the edge of a high bank which the river was washing away, but which, from the appearance of the flat, had once been deposited there by the action of the water. I see more to interest me on the river, in one day, than I do in the dried-up forest in a month. 'Tis a great pity that this country is not better watered.

Yesterday afternoon I was out shooting for an hour or two with a companion, in a little boat on a lagoon. We killed a black swan each; they are noble-looking birds on the water, and quite equal to their cousins at home.

Snakes are very numerous in this part of the country, but they are seldom seen very far from the river, or from some swamp or lagoon; for in the summer they spend a good part of the day in the water. The warm weather brings them out: black, brown, whip, diamond, and carpet snakes, all venomous, and some as much as six, or even eight feet long. The insects also come out with alarming strength on these days, when a thermometer in the sun rises to one hundred and thirty.

Almost the only time I have for writing is on a Sunday, and then one has to wash and mend, &c., and I generally ride out for a few hours—more to keep my mare under control than anything else, for she is very gay. The Christmas holidays I spent in going after her to Wodonga (forty-three miles from hence), where she was bred. She had strayed away from our camp. I walked there, but did not find her till after another day's walk; then I rode her home, and enjoyed my holiday as much as if I had been hard at work.

From all I have seen, I am convinced that there is much more drunkenness in the country townships, in proportion to the number of the inhabitants, than there is on the diggings. One reason for this is the universal custom of paying by checks. A man works for months at splitting, sawing, fencing, or anything else; then draws all his money in one check; goes to the public-house to change it and get a nobbler; and ends by coming out without a penny in his pocket. I have known two men knock down an eighty pound check each, in a day or two at the public-house.* On the diggings it is very different; a man gets his cash whenever he likes to sell his gold, and generally knows what to do with it.

Mr. Sumwun, our boss, is dead. I have been superintendent for some time, but now I suppose I shall again be thrown on my own resources. I do not dread the fall. Digging is too much of a lottery; indeed, I half believe there are great discoveries yet to be made in animal magnetism, and the attracting and repelling powers between gold and diggers. I know some men who always get a golden hole on any new rush, and others who never do; and yet the two sets may be equal in energy, intelligence, and practical experience. There ought to be some way

of explaining these things otherwise than by referring them to chance or luck.

I shall try how I may be magnetically affected to New Zealand gold. I will go to Otago.

To judge from my own experience, the province of Otago must get all the rain. Certainly I saw it blessed with the most plentiful supply of water. There was the sea all round, almost constant rain overhead, and the ground beneath so full, that great part of the flat was unworkable.

One day, our tent was robbed of five ounces thirteen pennyweights of gold (at three pounds twelve shillings an ounce). I had always carried the gold about with me; but on that day I left it planted in my stretcher, my mate promising to take it when he went out. I went to visit some old mates seven or eight miles off, and to get dinner with them (it being Sunday). When I came back, the gold, and nothing else, was gone. My pistols and watch lay close to it. My mate came home soon after, and said he had forgotten it. He shortly left me, and I lived by myself, with a bull-dog at the door, and a loaded revolver under my pillow.

One day I took my dog, a gun I borrowed, and a long knife. A man went with me, and he had another dog. We crossed the ranges for about five miles, and found signs of wild pigs—fresh signs; presently we saw a little white one sunning himself on the opposite range, so we went quietly up, and, through the fern, out bolted three or four large, and half a dozen little, pigs. I fired at a large one, but missed it; the dogs gave chase to another; and I followed a couple of little ones, they doubling about in the fern, which was waist deep, like rats. At last I caught one, and immediately went to help the dogs, which had got by the ears a boar of about sixty pounds weight. It was not very easy to stick him, on the side of a steep range. I put the blade, six inches long, behind his shoulder up to the handle, and it seemed to have no effect on him, but at last I got him into the gully and finished him. We then killed a sow of about a hundred pounds weight, and after a good run found more pigs, one an enormous boar, but I killed none. We carried home the boar and half the other, and also the captured pigling—little "Denis"—a long tramp over the ranges, and it came on to rain, of course. I put the little one in a sty close to my tent, where I had him for some days inside. He would eat from my hand the first night; next day he would follow me anywhere. I lived on salt wild pork for weeks after that pig hunt: a great saving where meat was from ninepence to a shilling a pound, and hunger sharp.

Of eatables free to all, besides the pigs descended from those that Captain Cook left on the island, there are very fine eels in the creeks. I have seen them of ten pounds weight, and heard of some weighing as much as twenty-eight pounds.

Nothing the richer for my first month's work at the Otago diggings, I was next packing to Fox's from Queenstown and Frankton, to go with horses for wages. After that I went digging again, with my old mate, of course. The most we could make was about three pounds a week per man. We went out to the district of Lake Wakatipua, which is half way between Frankton and Fox's, and on the main road then just opened for drays—the only dray road in this district. With an enormous amount of labour, having to carry all the materials a good distance, we built a hut of twenty feet long by twelve wide, thatched it, fitted it up inside, and opened it as a store and accommodation-house for travellers. We carried all the timber on our shoulders from the Kawaran river, down which it had drifted in the floods, to build that hut, at a distance of a mile and a half, and up several steep hills. My mate, who was a carpenter by trade, then heard of a job at the camp at the Arrow (Fox's), putting up quarters for the commissioner, troopers, &c. There he worked two or three months, getting twenty-five shillings a day, while I made a few pounds a week by our store.

You may think it foolish for a fellow to rush about the country, and especially such a country as this, but from the very nature and character of digging affairs one can hardly avoid it. A man comes to a place some time after it has been "rushed;" after a good deal of running about, he gets a piece of ground that pays him for the working; works it out, and can get no more. For, while he has been well employed, hundreds of later arrivals have been busy round about with pick, shovel, and tin dish, and have taken up every bit of ground worth working. The first comer knocks about for a while, idle, and then, perhaps, hears of a rush, knows that if he is not among the first he stands a poor chance in comparison with those who are, and that if he is, he may, by not unheard-of luck, clear thousands in a few weeks, as some did at the first rush on the Shotover and Arrow Rivers. If he is a wise man, he rolls up his blankets and is off.

New Zealand is a hard country for the digger. High mountains, deep rapid rivers, and steep-sided gullies to cross, very little or no firewood in many parts, and a climate that suits those coming from England direct better than it does the old Victorian diggers like myself. Where I now sit, whether I look north, south, east, or west, I see mountains towering one above another, and covered with snow, except on brown-looking patches, which are precipices, or places too steep for the snow to lie on. Mount Remarkable, which lies just over the Kawaran, and S.S.E. from this place, has had patches of snow on it all through the summer, which has been a very warm one. I write now in mid-winter, on the seventh of July.

I should much like to see some of the birds that Mr. Haast mentions in his account of explorations here, especially the nakapa and the kiwi. We have the wekas, or wood-hens, also the plovers, kakas, and ducks, and some parrots.

The kakas are something like cockatoos, but dark coloured, and with immense bills and claws. But the bird I should most like to see is the great moa; I do not see why he should not still be living in the dense forests towards the west coast, or rather in their neighbourhood. Moas have been very plentiful here at one time, for I cannot take a walk across the flats without seeing portions of the larger bones, such as those of the thigh, leg, and wing. There are several in my hut now, but none perfect. I have seen some of the bones full three feet long, and the joint of part of a thigh-bone is fifteen inches round, the circumference of the bone just below the joint being ten inches. These bones I picked up on the surface of the earth, where they must have lain ever since the bird died, and must have consequently wasted; still, now, though greatly decayed, they are as heavy as fresh ox bones. I also frequently see collections of small quartz pebbles up to the size of a walnut, sometimes lying on the flats miles away from any place where stones are to be found, and no doubt from the gizzard of the bird.

We have had a fine winter here, though occasional rains and mild weather, melting the snow on the mountains, have kept many of the rivers too high for the miners to get at their beds. This has been especially the case on the Shotover, where the precipices that shut in a great part of its course make it very difficult, and often impossible, to turn it. The floods which have come down that river every few weeks have done immense damage to the claims upon it. They sweep everything before them. A young Irishman was packing some rations to his claim on the Arrow while the Shotover was rising; he sent his load over in the ferry-boat, and rode his horse — he was washed off and drowned. Another man was washed from his tent door by the side of the Arrow River at Fox's. People saw him carried away, but could not save him. There was a regular clean sweep in the Arrow River and Shotover—dams, races, pumps, water-wheels, huts, winter stock, and everything in the way of rations, carried away. Flooded rivers may well come down in force when they run at from five to seven knots an hour, and sometimes, I believe, still more, even when the water in them is low.

We crossed some frightful mountains on the road from the Dunstan to this place. My mate and I left some of our blankets at the former township, and got a fifty-pound bag of flour, besides tea, sugar, bacon, cheese, &c., both for use on the road and at Fox's, where flour was then eighteen-pence per pound, and sugar, I think, three shillings. While at the Dunstan we had to pay only sixpence to sevenpence per pound for sugar.

Well, we started after weighing our swags, which were about seventy-three pounds each, and made Fox's in three and a quarter days. Fifty miles by the road we came, sometimes having to hold on by tufts of grass and rocks, to prevent ourselves from going too fast to the bottoms of hill-sides and gullies, and then having to do the same to get to the top of another height. Sometimes we rolled up our trousers, and took off our boots, to cross piercingly cold streams that rushed over rocks and sharp slate-stones; sometimes we had to walk after dark to reach some camping spot where there were supposed to be sticks enough to boil a kettle of tea; then, after a few hours of uncommonly sweet sleep, we would get up at daybreak to breakfast, roll up our tent and blankets, and go at a mountain as steep as the roof of a house, and so high that it would take three or four hours to climb to the top of it.

I was glad enough to get to Fox's. We had walked up to the Dunstan, one hundred and twenty miles, with about fifty-pound swags on our shoulders, in four and a half days.

When I knocked off packing up here, I walked over to the Dunstan to fetch what we had left behind, but some one had been there before me, and claimed everything—blankets, shirts, boots, revolver. Such robbery was rare in Victoria, where a man has been known to pin up his standing tent, go to England and back, and, on his return, find everything as he left it.

It rained for twenty-four hours heavily, on Sunday, the twelfth of July, and there were several landslips about the Shotover and Arrow Rivers. At a place called Butcher's Point, on the Shotover, a party of seven men were living together in a hut, on the mountain-side, a little above the river. Six were sleeping, and one was outside, looking out for the boulders that every now and then came thundering down from above. Then, all on a sudden, at about three o'clock in the morning, away went the whole hill-side, carrying with it the hut and the doomed six into the river. Nothing has been seen of them since; the man on watch was left standing unhurt. A man living on the Arrow River came outside his tent about the middle of the same night, when a landslip took his tent to where he will never see it again, but it did not touch him. An enormous amount of damage has been done on both rivers; several poor fellows who lost all else in the flood, had to run for their lives.

Many horses have been killed here by falling, and I have heard from several people that a man was to be seen lying dead, with his swag, under a precipice, where no one could get near him. It was somewhere towards the upper part of the Shotover, last summer. More than fifty lives are known to have been lost on that river by floods and land-slips this winter. Twelve men were killed in a mob at one place, six in a hut at another, five at a third, and so on. A good many of the bodies were recovered, some most frightfully smashed and torn. There cannot have been floods for very many years at all like those of this winter, as is shown by the drift timber and other signs.

Rees, a squatter, who has the cattle-run here, also slaughters for the butchers, besides having many other irons in the fire. Last week he had a mob of fat cattle which he had bought down in Southland, and was driving them up by the side

of the big lake, when thirty-two of them slipped on some rocks at a place called the Devil's Staircase, and fell into a gully, and were killed. The man could not get at them to bleed them, so the meat will be entirely lost. Rees had given forty-six pounds for *one* of them—total loss over 1400*l*. Fine country!

It is said that Victoria only wants fencing in. This island wants hammering out flat.

We have been overrun with rats and mice lately; these plagues swarm, I believe, in all parts of New Zealand. I caught a great many in traps of my own invention. I also got some strychnine from Dunedin, where it sells for a guinea an ounce. It put a stop to their mischief pretty quickly. Before I had the poison and my traps, I could not keep meat, flour, candles, soap, or anything at all eatable. My head, as I lay in bed, was a favourite springing-place for the rats who wished to get upon the table. They gnawed a large hole in the bottom of a bullock-hide boat which we have on the lake. I have since bought a kitten for seven and sixpence, of a man who was going away; he had carried it about a hundred and eighty miles on the top of his swag. The general price here for cats, is now from thirty to fifty shillings. It was still more. A man passed through this place with a horse-load of them in boxes, which he brought from Dunedin a few weeks ago.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER I. THE WHITE HORSE AT COBLENTZ.

Out of a window of the Weissen Ross, at Coblentz, looking upon the rapid Rhine, over whose circling eddies a rich sunset shed a golden tint, two young Englishmen lounged and smoked their cigars; rarely speaking, and, to all seeming, wearing that air of boredom which, strangely enough, would appear peculiar to a very enjoyable time of life. They were acquaintances of only a few days. They had met on an Antwerp steamer—rejoined each other in a picture-gallery—chanced to be side by side at a table d'hôte at Brussels, and, at last, drifted into one of those intimacies which, to very young men, represents friendship. They agreed they would travel together, all the more readily that neither cared very much in what direction. "As for me," said Calvert, "it doesn't much signify where I pass the interval; but, in October, I must return to India and join my regiment."

"And I," said Loyd, "about the same time must be in England. I have just been called to the bar."

"Slow work that must be, I take it."

"Do you like soldiering?" asked Loyd, in a low quiet voice.

"Hate it! abhor it! It's all very well when you join first. You are so glad to be free of Woolwich or Sandhurst, or wherever it is. You are eager to be treated like a man, and so full of Cox and Greenwood, and the army tailor, and your camp furniture, and then comes the depôt and the mess. One's first three months at mess seemed to be the cream of existence."

"Is it really so jolly? Are the fellows good talkers?"

"About the worst in the universe; but, to a young hand, they are enchantment. All their discourse is of something to be enjoyed. It is that foot-race, that game of billiards, that match at cricket, that stunning fine girl to ride out with, those excellent cigars Watkins is sending us; and so on. All is action, and very pleasant action too. Then duty, though it's the habit to revile and curse it, duty is associated with a sense of manhood; a sort of goose-step chivalry to be sure, but still chivalry. One likes to see the sergeant with his orderly book, and to read, 'Ensign Calvert for the main guard.'"

"And how long does all this last?"

"I gave it three months; some have been able to prolong it to six. Much depends upon where the depôt is, and what sort of corps you're in."

"Now for the reaction! Tell me of that."

"I cannot; it's too dreadful. It's a general detestation of all things military, from the Horse Guards to the mess waiter. You hate drill—parade—inspection—the adjutant—the wine committee—the paymaster—the field-officer of the day—and the major's wife. You are chafed about everything—you want leave, you want to exchange, you want to be with the depôt, you want to go to Corfu, and you are sent to Canada. Your brother officers are the slowest fellows in the service; you are quizzed about them at the mess of the Nine Hundred and Ninth—'Yours' neither give balls nor private theatricals. You wish you were in the Cape Coast Fencibles—in fact, you feel that Destiny has placed you in the exact position you are least fitted for."

"So far as I can see, however, all the faults are in yourself."

"Not altogether. If you have plenty of money, your soldier life is simply a barrier to the enjoyment of it. You are chained to one spot, to one set of associates, and to one mode of existence. If you're poor, it's fifty times worse, and all your time is spent in making five-and-sixpence a day equal to a guinea.

Loyd made no answer, but smoked on.

"I know," resumed the other, "that this is not what many will tell you, or what, perhaps, would suggest itself to your own mind from a chance intercourse with us. To the civilian the mess is not without a certain attraction, and there is, I own, something very taking in the aspect of that little democracy where the fair-cheeked boy is on an equality with the old bronzed soldier, and the freshness of Rugby or Eton is confronted with the stern experiences of the veteran campaigner; but this wears off very soon, and it is a day to be marked with white chalk when one can escape his mess dinner, with all its good cookery, good wine, and good attendance, and eat a mutton-chop at the Green Man with Simpkins, just because Simpkins wears a black coat, lives down in the country, and never

was in a Gazette in his life. And now for *your* side of the medal—what is it like?"

"Nothing very gorgeous or brilliant, I assure you," said Loyd, gently; for he spoke with a low quiet tone, and had a student-like submissive manner, in strong contrast to the other's easy and assured air. "With great abilities, great industry, and great connexion, the career is a splendid one, and the rewards the highest. But between such golden fortunes and mine there is a whole realm of space. However, with time and hard work, and ordinary luck, I don't despair of securing a fair livelihood."

"After—say—thirty years, eh?"

"Perhaps so."

"By the time that I drop out of the army a retired lieutenant-colonel, with three hundred a year, you'll be in fair practice at Westminster, with, let us take it, fifteen hundred, or two thousand—perhaps five."

"I shall be quite satisfied if I confirm the prediction in the middle of it."

"Ah," continued the soldier. "There's only one road to success—to marry a charming girl with money. Ashley of ours, who has done the thing himself, says that you can get money—any man can, if he will; that, in fact, if you will only take a little trouble you may have all the attractions you seek for in a wife, plus fortune."

"Pleasant theory, but still not unlikely to involve a self-deception, since, even without knowing it, a man may be far more interested by the pecuniary circumstance."

"Don't begin with it; first fall in love—I mean to yourself, without betraying it—and then look after the settlement. If it be beneath your expectation, trip your anchor, and get out of the reach of fire."

"And you may pass your best years in that unprofitable fashion, not to say what you may find yourself become in the mean while."

The soldier looked at the other askance, and there was in his sidelong glance a sort of irony that seemed to say, "Oh! you're an enthusiast, are you?"

"There you have me, Loyd," said he, hurriedly; "that is the weak point of my whole system; but remember, after all, do what one will, he can't be as fresh at five-and-thirty as five-and-twenty—he will have added ten years of distrusts, doubts, and dodges to his nature in spite of himself."

"If they must come in spite of himself, there is no help for it; but let him at least not deliberately lay a plan to acquire them."

"One thing is quite clear," said the other, boldly; "the change will come, whether we like it or not, and the wisest philosophy is to plan our lives so that we may conform to the alterations time will make in us. I don't want to be dissatisfied with my condition at five-and-forty, just for the sake of some caprice that I indulged in at five-and-twenty, and if I find a very charming creature, with an angelic temper, deep blue eyes, the prettiest foot in Christendom, and a neat sum in Consols, I'll promise you there will soon be a step in the promotion of her Majesty's service, vice Lieutenant Harry Calvert, sold out."

The reply of the other was lost in the hoarse noise of the steam which now rushed from the escape-pipe of a vessel that had just arrived beneath the window. She was bound for Mayence, but stopped to permit some few passengers to land at that place. The scene exhibited all that bustle and confusion so perplexing to the actors, but so amusing to those who are mere spectators; for, while some were eagerly pressing forward to gain the gangway with their luggage, the massive machinery of the bridge of boats was already in motion to open a space for the vessel to move up the stream. The young Englishmen were both interested in watching a very tall, thin old lady, whose efforts to gather together the members of her party, her luggage, and her followers, seemed to have overcome all the ordinary canons of politeness, for she pushed here and drove there, totally regardless of the inconvenience she was occasioning. She was followed by two young ladies, from whose courteous gestures it could be inferred how deeply their companion's insistance pained them, and how ashamed they felt at their position.

"I am afraid she is English," said Loyd.

"Can there be a doubt of it? Where did you ever see that reckless indifference to all others, that selfish disregard of decency, save in a certain class of our people? Look, she nearly pushed that fat man down the hatchway; and see, she will not show the steward her tickets, and she will have her change. Poor girls! what misery and exposure all this is for you!"

"But the steamer is beginning to move on. They will be carried off! See, they are hauling at the gangway already."

"She's on it; she doesn't care; she's over now. Well done, old lady! That back-hander was neatly given; and see, she has marshalled her forces cleverly; sent the light division in front, and brings up the rear herself with the luggage and the maids. Now, I call that as clever a landing on an enemy's shore as ever was done."

"I must say I pity the girls, and they look as if they felt all the mortification of their position. And yet, they'll come to the same sort of thing themselves one of these days, as naturally as one of us will to wearing very easy boots and loose-fitting waistcoats."

As he said this, the new arrivals had passed up from the landing-place, and entered the hotel.

"Let us at least be merciful in our criticisms on foreigners, while we exhibit to their eyes such national specimens as these!" said Calvert. "For my own part, I believe, that from no one source have we as a people derived so much of sneer and shame, as from that which includes within it what is called the unprotected female."

"What if we were to find out that they were Belgians, or Dutch, or Americans? or better

still, what if they should chance to be remarkably good sort of English? I conclude we shall meet them at supper."

"Yes, and there goes the bell for that gathering, which on the present occasion will be a thin one. They're all gone off to that fair at Lahnech." And so saying, Calvert drew nigh a glass, and made one of those extempore toilets which young men with smart moustaches are accustomed to perform before presenting themselves to strangers. Loyd merely took his hat, and walked to the door.

"There! that ought to be enough, surely, for all reasonable captivation!" said he, laughingly.

"Perhaps you are right; besides, I suspect in the present case it is a mere waste of ammunition;" and, with a self-approving smile, he nodded to his image in the glass, and followed his friend.

One line at this place will serve to record that Calvert was very good looking; blue-eyed, blond-whiskered, Saxon-looking withal; erect carriage and stately air, which are always taken as favourable types of our English blood. Perhaps a certain over-consciousness of these personal advantages, perhaps a certain conviction of the success that had attended these gifts, gave him what, in slang phrase, is called a "tigerish" air; but it was plain to see that he had acquired his ease of manner in good company, and that his pretension was rather the stamp of a class than of an individual.

Loyd was a pale, delicate-looking youth, with dark eyes set in the deepest of orbits, that imparted sadness to features in themselves sufficiently grave. He seemed what he was, an overworked student, a man who had sacrificed health to toil, and was only aware of the bad bargain when he felt unequal to continue the contest. His doctors had sent him abroad for rest, for that "distraction" which as often sustain its English as its French acceptance, and is only a source of worry and anxiety where rest and peace are required. His means were of the smallest—he was the only son of a country vicar, who was sorely pinched to afford him a very narrow support—and who had to raise by a loan the hundred pounds that were to give him this last chance of regaining strength and vigour. If travel, therefore, had its pleasures, it had also its pains for him. He felt, and very bitterly, the heavy load that his present enjoyment was laying upon those he loved best in the world, and this it was that, at his happiest moments, threw a gloom over an already moody and depressed temperament.

The sad thought of those at home, whose privations were the price of his pleasures, tracked him at every step; and pictures of that humble fireside where sat his father and his mother, rose before him as he gazed at the noble cathedral, or stood amazed before the greatest triumphs of art. This sensitive feeling, preying upon one naturally susceptible, certainly tended little to his recovery, and even at times so overbore every other sentiment, that he regretted he had ever come abroad. Scarcely a day passed that he did not hesitate whether he should not turn his steps homeward to England.

CHAPTER II. THE PASSENGERS ON THE STEAMBOAT.

The table d'hôte room was empty as the two Englishmen entered it at supper-time, and they took their places, moodily enough, at one end of a table laid for nigh thirty guests. "All gone to Lahnech, Franz?" asked Calvert of the waiter.

"Yes, sir, but they'll be sorry for it, for there's thunder in the air, and we are sure to have a deluge before nightfall."

"And the new arrivals, are they gone too?"

"No, sir. They are up-stairs. The old lady would seem to have forgotten a box, or a desk, on board the steamer, and she has been in such a state about it that she couldn't think of supping; and the young ones appear to sympathise in her anxieties, for they, too, said, 'Oh, we can't think of eating just now.'"

"But, of course, she needn't fuss herself. It will be detained at Mayence, and given up to her when she demands it."

A very expressive shrug of the shoulders was the only answer Franz made, and Calvert added, "You don't quite agree with me, perhaps?"

"It is an almost daily event, the loss of luggage on those Rhine steamers; so much so, that one is tempted to believe that stealing luggage is a regular livelihood here."

Just at this moment the Englishwoman in question entered the room, and in French of a very home manufacture asked the waiter how she could manage, by means of the telegraph, to reclaim her missing property.

A most involved and intricate game of cross purposes ensued; for the waiter's knowledge of French was scarcely more extensive, and embarrassed, besides, by some specialities in accent, so that though *she* questioned and *he* replied, the discussion gave little hope of an intelligible solution.

"May I venture to offer my services, madam," said Calvert, rising and bowing politely. "If I can be of the least use on this occasion——"

"None whatever, sir. I am perfectly competent to express my own wishes, and have no need of an interpreter;" and then turning to the waiter, added: "Montrez moi le telegraph, garçon."

The semi-tragic air in which she spoke, not to add the strange accent of her very peculiar French, was almost too much for Calvert's gravity, while Loyd, half pained by the ridicule thus attached to a countrywoman, held down his head and never uttered a word. Meanwhile the old lady had retired with a haughty toss of her towering bonnet, followed by Franz.

"The old party is fierce," said Calvert, as he began his supper, "and would not have me at any price."

"I suspect that this mistrust of each other is very common with us English: not so much

from any doubt of our integrity, as from a fear lest we should not be equal in social rank."

"Well; but really, don't you think that our externals might have satisfied that old lady she had nothing to apprehend on that score?"

"I can't say how she may have regarded that point," was the cautious answer.

Calvert pushed his glass impatiently from him, and said, petulantly, "The woman is evidently a governess, or a companion, or a housekeeper. She writes her name in the book, Miss Grainger, and the others are called Walter. Now, after all, a Miss Grainger might, without derogating too far, condescend to know a Fusilier, eh? Oh, here she comes again."

The lady thus criticised had now re-entered the room, and was busily engaged in studying the announcement of steam-boat departures and arrivals, over the chimney.

"It is too absurd," said she, pettishly, in French, "to close the telegraph-office at eight, that the clerks may go to a ball."

"Not to a ball, madam, to the fair at Lahnech," interposed Franz.

"I don't care, sir, whether it be a dance or a junketing. It is the same inconvenience to the public; and the landlord, and the secretary, as you call him, of this hotel, are all gone, and nothing left here but you."

Whether it was the shameless effrontery of the contempt she evinced in these words, or the lamentable look of abasement of the waiter, that overcame Calvert, certain is it he made no effort to restrain himself, but, leaning back in his chair, laughed heartily and openly.

"Well, sir," said she, turning fiercely on him, "you force me to say, that I never witnessed a more gross display of ill breeding and bad manners."

"Had you only added, madam, 'after a very long experience of life,' the remark would have been perfect," said he, still laughing.

"Oh, Calvert!" broke in Loyd, in a tone of deprecation; but the old lady, white with passion, retired without waiting for that apology which, certainly, there was little prospect of her receiving.

"I am sorry you should have said that," said Loyd, "for though she was scarcely measured in her remark, your laughter was a gross provocation."

"How the cant of your profession sticks to you!" said the other. "There was the lawyer in every word of that speech. There was the 'case' and the 'set off.'"

Loyd could not help smiling, though scarcely pleased at this rejoinder.

"Take my word for it," said Calvert, as he helped himself to the dish before him, "there is nothing in life so aggressive as one of our elderly countrywomen when travelling in an independent condition. The theory is attack—attack—attack! They have a sort of vague impression that the passive are always imposed on, and certainly they rarely place themselves in that category. As I live, here she comes once more."

The old lady had now entered the room with a slip of paper in her hand, to which she called the waiter's attention, saying, "You will despatch this message to Mayence, when the office opens in the morning. See that there is no mistake about it."

"It must be in German, madam," said Franz. "They'll not take it in in any foreign language."

"Tell her you'll translate it, Loyd. Go in, man, and get your knock-down as I did," whispered Calvert.

Loyd blushed slightly; but not heeding the sarcasm of his companion, he arose, and, approaching the stranger, said, "It will give me much pleasure to put your message into German, madam, if it will at all convenience you."

It was not till after a very searching look into his face, and an apparently satisfactory examination of his features, that she replied, "Well, sir, I make no objection; there can be no great secresy in what passes through a telegraph-office. You can do it, if you please."

Now, though the speech was not a very gracious acknowledgment of a proffered service, Loyd took the paper and proceeded to read it. It was not without an effort, however, that he could constrain himself so far as not to laugh aloud at the contents, which began by an explanation that the present inconvenience was entirely owing to the very shameful arrangements made by the steam-packet company for the landing of passengers at intermediate stations, and through which the complainant, travelling with her nieces, Millicent and Florence Walter, and her maids, Susannah Tucker and Mary Briggs, and having for luggage the following articles——

"May I observe, madam," said Loyd, in a mild tone of remonstrance, "that these explanations are too lengthy for the telegraph, not to say very costly, and as your object is simply to reclaim a missing article of your baggage——"

"I trust, sir, that having fully satisfied your curiosity as to who we are, and of what grievance we complain, that you will spare me your comments as to the mode in which we prefer our demand for redress; but I ought to have known better, and I deserve it!" and, snatching the paper rudely from his hand, she dashed out of the room in passion.

"By Jove! you fared worse than myself," said Calvert, as he laughed loud and long. "You got a heavier castigation for your polite interference than I did for my impertinence."

"It is a lesson, at all events," said Loyd, still blushing for his late defeat. "I wonder is she all right up here," and he touched his forehead significantly.

"Of course she is. Nay, more, I'll wager a Nap. that in her own set, amidst the peculiar horrors who form her daily intimates, she is a strong-minded, sensible woman, 'that won't stand humbug,' and so on. These are specialities; they wear thick shoes, woollen petticoats, and brown veils, quarrel with cabmen, and live at Clapham."

"But why do they come abroad?"

"Ah! that is the question that would puzzle nineteen out of every twenty of us. With a panorama in Leicester-square, and a guide-book in a chimney-corner, we should know more of the Tyrol than we'll ever acquire junketing along in a hired coach, and only eager not to pay too much for one's 'Kalbsbraten' or 'Schweinfleisch,' and yet here we come in shoals,—to grumble and complain of all our self-imposed miseries, and incessantly lament the comforts of the land that we won't live in."

"Some of us come for health," said Loyd, sorrowfully.

"And was there ever such a blunder? Why, the very vicissitudes of a continental climate are more trying than any severity in our own. Imagine the room we are now sitting in, of a winter's evening, with a stove heated to ninety-five, and the door opening every five minutes to a draught of air eleven degrees below zero! You pass out of this furnace to your bedroom, by a stair and corridor like the Arctic regions, to gain an uncarpeted room, with something like a knife-tray for a bed, and a poultice of feathers for a coverlet!"

"And for all that we like it, we long for it; save, pinch, screw, and sacrifice Heaven knows what of home enjoyment just for six weeks or two months of it."

"Shall I tell you why? Just because Simpkins has done it. Simpkins has been up the Rhine and dined at the Cursaal at Ems, and made his little début at roulette at Wiesbaden, and spoken his atrocious French at Frankfort, and we won't consent to be less men of the world than Simpkins; and though Simpkins knows that it doesn't 'pay,' and *I* know that it doesn't pay, we won't 'peach' either of us, just for the pleasure of seeing you, and a score like you, fall into the same blunder, experience the same disasters, and incur the same disappointments as ourselves."

"No. I don't agree with you; or, rather, I won't agree with you. I am determined to enjoy this holiday of mine to the utmost my health will let me, and you shall not poison the pleasure by that false philosophy which, affecting to be deep, is only depreciatory."

"And the honourable gentleman resumed his seat, as the newspapers say, amidst loud and vociferous cheers, which lasted for several minutes." This Calvert said as he drummed a noisy applause upon the table, and made Loyd's face glow with a blush of deep shame and confusion.

"I told you, the second day we travelled together, and I tell you again now, Calvert," said he, falteringly, "that we are nowise suited to each other, and never could make good travelling companions. You know far more of life than I either do or wish to know. You see things with an acute and piercing clearness which I cannot attain to. You have no mind for the sort of humble things which give pleasure to a man simple as myself; and, lastly, I don't like to say it, but I must, your means are so much more ample than mine, that to associate with you I must live in a style totally above my pretensions. All these are confessions more or less painful to make, but now that I have made them, let me have the result, and say, good-by—good-by."

There was an emotion in the last words that more than compensated for what preceded them. It was the genuine sorrow that loneliness ever impresses on certain natures; but Calvert read the sentiment as a tribute to himself, and hastily said, "No, no, you are all wrong. The very disparities you complain of are the bonds between us. The differences in our temperament are the resources by which the sphere of our observation will be widened—my scepticism will be the corrector of your hopefulness—and, as to means, take my word for it, nobody can be harder up than I am, and if you'll only keep the bag, and limit the outgoings, I'll submit to any short-comings when you tell me they are savings."

"Are you serious—downright in earnest in all this?" asked Loyd.

"So serious, that I propose our bargain should begin from this hour. We shall each of us place ten Napoleons in that bag of yours. You shall administer all outlay, and I bind myself to follow implicitly all your behests, as though I were a ward and you my guardian."

"I'm not very confident about the success of the scheme. I see many difficulties already, and there may be others that I cannot foresee; still, I am willing to give it a trial."

"At last I realise one of my fondest anticipations, which was to travel without the daily recurring miseries of money reckoning."

"Don't take those cigars, they are supplied by the waiter, and cost two groschen each, and they sell for three groschen a dozen in the Platz;" and, so saying, Loyd removed the plate from before him in a quiet business-like way, that promised well for the spirit in which his trust would be exercised.

Calvert laughed as he laid down the cigar, but his obedience ratified the pact between them.

"When do we go from this?" asked he, in a quiet and half-submissive tone.

"Oh, come, this is too much!" said Loyd. "I undertook to be purser, but not pilot."

"Well, but I insist upon your assuming all the cares of legislation. It is not alone that I want not to think of the cash; but I want to have no anxieties about the road we go, where we halt, and when we move on. I want, for once in my life, to indulge the glorious enjoyment of perfect indolence—such another chance will scarcely offer itself."

"Be it so. Whenever you like to rebel, I shall be just as ready to abdicate. I'll go to my room now and study the map, and by the time you have finished your evening's stroll on the bridge, I shall have made the plan of our future wanderings."

"Agreed!" said Calvert. "I'm off to search for some of those cheap cigars you spoke of."

"Stay; you forget that you have not got any money. Here are six silver groschen; take two dozen, and see that they don't give you any of those vile Swiss ones in the number."

He took the coin with becoming gravity, and set out on his errand.

CHAPTER III. FELLOW-TRAVELLERS' LIFE.

Partly to suit Calvert's passion for fishing, partly to meet his own love of a quiet, unbroken, easy existence, Loyd decided for a ramble through the lakes of Northern Italy; and, in about ten days after the compact had been sealed, they found themselves at the little inn of the Trota, on the Lago d'Orta. The inn, which is little more than a cottage, is beautifully situated on a slender promontory that runs into the lake, and is itself almost hidden by the foliage of orange and oleander trees that cover it. It was very hard to believe it to be an inn with its trellised vine-walk, its little arched boat-house, and a small shrine beside the lake, where, on certain saints' days, a priest said a mass, and blessed the fish and those that caught them. It was still harder, too, to credit the fact when one discovered his daily expenses to be all comprised within the limits of a few francs, and this with the services of the host, Signor Onofrio, for boatman.

To Loyd it was a perfect paradise. The glorious mountain range, all rugged and snow-capped—the deep-bosomed chesnut-woods—the mirror-like lake—the soft and balmy air, rich in orange odours—the earth teeming with violets—all united to gratify the senses, and wrap the mind in a dreamy ecstasy and enjoyment. It was equally a spot to relax in or to work, and although now more disposed for the former, he planned to himself to come back here, at some future day, and labour with all the zest that a strong resolve to succeed inspires.

What law would he not read? What mass of learned lore would he not store up! What strange and curious knowledge would he not acquire in this calm seclusion! He parcelled out his day in imagination; and, by rising early, and by habits of uninterrupted study, he contemplated that in one long vacation here he would have amassed an amount of information that no discursive labour could ever attain. And then, to distract him from weightier cares, he would write those light and sketchy things, some of which had already found favour with editors. He had already attained some small literary successes, and was, like a very young man, delighted with the sort of recognition they had procured him; and, last of all, there was something of romance in this life of mysterious seclusion. He was the hero of a little story to himself, and this thought diffused itself over every spot and every occupation, as is only known to those who like to make poems of their lives, and be to their own hearts their own epic.

Calvert, too, liked the place; but scarcely with the same enthusiasm. The fishing was excellent. He had taken a "four-pounder," and heard of some double the size. The cookery of the little inn was astonishingly good. Onofrio had once been a courier, and picked up some knowledge of the social chemistry on his travels. Beccafichi abounded, and the small wine of the Podere had a false smack of Rhenish, and then with cream, and fresh eggs, and fresh butter, and delicious figs in profusion, there were, as he phrased it, "far worse places in the Hill country!"

Besides being the proprietor of the inn, Onofrio owned a little villa, a small cottage-like thing on the opposite shore of the lake, to which he made visits once or twice a week, with a trout, or a capon, or a basket of artichokes, or some fine peaches—luxuries which apparently always found ready purchasers amongst his tenants. He called them English, but his young guests, with true British phlegm, asked him no questions about them, and he rarely, if ever, alluded to them. Indeed, his experience of English people had enabled him to see that they ever maintained a dignified reserve towards each other even when offering to foreigners all the freedom of an old intimacy; and then he had an Italian's tact not to touch on a dangerous theme, and thus he contented himself with the despatch of his occasional hamper without attracting more attention to the matter than the laborious process of inscribing the words "Illustrissima Sign^{r}. Grangiari," on the top.

It was about a month after they had taken up their abode at the Trota that Onofrio was seized with one of those fevers of the country which, though rarely dangerous to life, are still so painful and oppressive as to require some days of confinement and care. In this interval, Calvert was deprived of his chief companion, for mine host was an enthusiastic fisherman, and an unequalled guide to all parts of the lake. The young soldier, chafed and fretted out of all measure at this interruption to his sport, tried to read; tried to employ himself in the garden; endeavoured to write a long-promised letter home; and at last, in utter failure, and in complete discontent with himself and everything, he walked moodily about, discussing within himself whether he would not frankly declare to Loyd that the whole thing bored him, and that he wanted to be free.

"This sort of thing suits Loyd well enough," would he say. "It is the life of Brazenose or Christchurch in a purer air and finer scenery. He can read five or six hours at a stretch, and then plunge into the lake for a swim, or pull an oar for half an hour, by way of refreshment. He is as much a man of reflection and thought as I am of action and energy. Yet, it is your slow, solemn fellow," he would say, "who is bored to death when thrown upon himself;" and now he had, in a measure, to recant this declaration, and own that the solitude was too much for *him*.

While he was yet discussing with himself how to approach the subject, the hostess came to tell him that Onofrio's illness would prevent him acting as his boatman, and begged the boat

might be spared him on that day, to send over some fruit and fresh flowers he had promised to the family at St. Rosalia; "that is," added she, "if I'm lucky enough to find a boatman to take them, for at this season all are in full work in the fields."

"What would you say, Donna Marietta, if I were to take charge of the basket myself, and be your messenger to the villa?"

The hostess was far less astonished at his offer than he had imagined she would be. With her native ideas on these subjects, she only accepted the proposal as an act of civility, and not as a surpassing piece of condescension, and simply said, "Onofrio shall thank you heartily for it when he is up and about again."

If this was not the exact sort of recognition he looked for, Calvert at all events saw that he was pledged to fulfil his offer; and so he stood by while she measured out peas, and counted over artichokes, and tied up bundles of mint and thyme, and stored up a pannier full of ruddy apples, surmounting all with a gorgeous bouquet of richly-perfumed flowers, culled in all the careless profusion of that land of plenty. Nor was this all. She impressed upon him how he was to extol the excellence of this, and the beauty of that, to explain that the violets were true Parmesans, and the dates such as only Onofrio knew how to produce.

Loyd laughed his own little quiet laugh when he heard of his friend's mission, and his amusement was not lessened at seeing the half-awkward and more than half-unwilling preparations Calvert made to fulfil it.

"Confound the woman!" said he, losing all patience; "she wanted to charge me with all the bills and reckonings for the last three weeks, on the pretext that her husband is but ill-skilled in figures, and that it was a rare chance to find one like myself to undertake the office. I have half a mind to throw the whole cargo overboard when I reach the middle of the lake. I suppose a Nap. would clear all the cost."

"Oh, I'll not hear of such extravagance," said Loyd, demurely.

"I conclude I have a right to an act of personal folly, eh?" asked Calvert, pettishly.

"Nothing of the kind. I drew up our contract with great care, and especially on this very head, otherwise it would have been too offensive a bargain for him who should have observed all the rigid injunctions of its economy."

"It was a stupid arrangement from the first," said Calvert, warmly. "Two men yet never lived, who could say that each could bound his wants by those of another. Not to say that an individual is not himself the same each day of the week. I require this on Tuesday, which I didn't want on Monday, and so on."

"You are talking of caprice as though it were necessity, Calvert."

"I don't want to discuss the matter like a special pleader, and outside the margin of our conjoint expenses I mean to be as wasteful as I please."

"As the contract is only during pleasure, it can never be difficult to observe it."

"Yes, very true. You have arrived at my meaning by another road. When was it we last replenished the bag?"

"A little more than a week ago."

"So that there is about a fortnight yet to run?"

"About that."

Calvert stood in thought for a few seconds, and then, as if having changed the purpose he was meditating, turned suddenly away and hastened down to the boat quay.

Like many bashful and diffident men, Loyd had a false air of coldness and resolution, which impressed others greatly, but reacted grievously on his own heart in moments of afterthought; and now, no sooner had his companion gone, than he felt what a mockery it was for him to have assumed a rigid respect for a mere boyish agreement, which lost all its value the moment either felt it burdensome. "*I* was not of an age to play Mentor to *him*. It could never become me to assume the part of a guardian. I ought to have said the bargain ceases the instant you repudiate it. A forced companionship is mere slavery. Let us part the good friends we met; and so on." At last he determined to sit down and write a short note to Calvert, releasing him from his thraldom, and giving him his full and entire liberty.

"As for myself, I will remain here so long as I stay abroad, and if I come to the Continent again, I will make for this spot as for a home: and now for the letter."

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XVI. LILY BEGINS TO LEARN THINGS.

RHODODENDRON HOUSE was to Lily a mysterious monster, a dragon that devoured children. After the first "getting-up bell," the first prayer-meeting, and the first school breakfast, he gobbled her up; and she, a very small Jonah indeed, became absorbed in him, and dwelt in his immensity. Of the great boiling, turbid sea of the external world she could know nothing—the dragon's jaws formed the entrance to the school, and were garnished with many fangs. So she abode within, and at first trembled, but gradually grew accustomed to the arched-inwards, and ribbed sides, and vast viscera of the monster; and, as it was her nature to love things when she became accustomed to them, the school dragon lost, at last, all his terrors for the child, and Lily became that exceeding rarity, a little girl who was fond of her school.

Quite alone, she had nothing else in the world to be fond of. The people who had brought her to school had forgotten to put any toys among her needments. Her exquisite papa had, probably, never heard of such vulgar frivolities, and Jean Baptiste Constant had, perhaps, matters more important to think of at the moment. Lily had not so much as a doll. The rough old playthings she used to potter about with in the plasterer's house soon faded into the nothingness of oblivion. So, too, did the plasterer himself, and his wife her old nurse, and their little boy her foster-brother. First, she forgot their names, and only bore them in mind as the good people far away, who used to be fond of her, and romp with her, and bear with her little tempers. Then, the plasterer's face and form began to be a matter of doubt, and she could not tell whether he had red hair or black hair—whether he wore a beard, or whiskers, or both, or neither. Curiously, she remembered latest, his strong ribbed corduroy trousers—probably because she had careered on them so many times cockhorse to Coventry, and she connected with these garments the strong acrid fumes of the tobacco he smoked. Blue vapour, hot and pungent, was always curling from that excellent man; without his pipe, Lily would have lost her last definite conception of her foster-father. But the pipe went out at last, and the smoke mingled with the clouds, and drifted away into space. The boy, her playmate, she forgot in one sudden landslip of recollection. He was there, for a moment, with a rough head she used to touzle, a top he used to spin for her amusement, a back that was always at her service. He was her horse, her dog, her coach, her ship, her steam-engine, but all at once his fastenings loosened, and he tumbled down into the gulf for ever. And then, last of all, poor nurse went. Lily clung to her image as long as ever she could, and struggled hard to retain it, but the inevitable law asserted it, and nurse melted away. She came to have two faces, like Janus, and then none at all. Her hands and feet disappeared in a wreath of filmy imaginations. Long after that, her checked apron remained—the apron on which Lily used to sit before the fire, warm and dry and glowing from her bath, purring like a kitten—the apron which had strings to be pulled, and twisted, and untied by her uncertain little fingers, to the great discomfort, but never-failing delight of the good woman—the apron to whose corner Lily used to cling in her first venturesome excursions into the back garden. But the apron was doomed. The records of that court of exchequer crumbled into decay, and away went nurse, apron, and all, not to be remembered again on this side death, when—oh! joy for some, and woe unutterable for others—we shall remember everything.

This last holdfast being taken away, what remained? Rhododendron House, and nothing more. The apparition of the two strange men who had brought her by night to school had scarcely ruffled the surface of the lake, had scarcely breathed upon the mirror. They could scarcely have been forgotten, for they had never been remembered. When the Miss Bunnycastles spoke to Lily about her papa, and told her that he was a perfect gentleman, and brought a man-servant with him who was almost as grand a gentleman as he, she could respond only by a vacant stare. She knew no papa. Little by little, there came over her a vague consciousness that she ought properly to have one, for most of the young ladies were continually vaunting their possession of such a parent; and when she was about six, she toddled up one day to Mr. Drax, when he was paying one of his periodical visits, and with a very grave and knowledge-

seeking visage, asked him this alarming question: "Missa Drax, are you my pappa?" The discreet medical practitioner was dreadfully disconcerted at this crude interrogatory. Old Mrs. Bunnycastle bleated, "Lawk a' mercy, what next?" Two of the Miss Bunnycastles tittered; but the third, Miss Barbara, told Lily, severely, that she would never be anything better than a little idiot.

Meanwhile, she had set herself, first intuitively, next, of her own volition, to learn things. I don't mean lessons. For the first year all the resources of the law of kindness were powerless to teach her, even her lessons; and although Miss Barbara had a dim impression that she should properly by this time be deep in the mysteries of Mangnall, she forbore, after a while, to set her tasks which she could not by any possibility grasp even the remotest meaning of, and consoled herself with the thought that there was plenty of time to rescue her from the perilous condition of a dunce. So Lily was left to a few books that had pictures in them, and but few attempts were made to drum the significance of the accompanying letter-press into her head. She was too small to stand up in a class—too small to have copy-books, or good marks, or bad marks—too small for anything, in fact, save to wander or trot about as she listed, from house to playground, from playground to school-ground—now talking to the furniture, and now to the teachers—now listening, with demure astonishment, to the eloquence of Mrs. Bunnycastle, which was Greek to her—to the orations of the governesses, which were Hebrew to her—and to the monotonous drone of the young ladies, as at appointed times and seasons they repeated their lessons. In fine, she became as much a pet and plaything in the establishment as any very tiny domestic animal that was neither troublesome nor spiteful, but very playful and very affectionate, might have been. Miss Barbara was of opinion that she should be kept "strict;" but, at last, even she joined in the general concession, and seemed to be as fond of Lily as every one else in the house was.

But, all this time, Lily was learning things. She knew the playground by heart. She had almost a pre-Raphaelite acquaintance, mentally, with the bricks, with their various hues, now red, now russet, now purple; with the mossy rime that covered some of them, with the small beetles that did wonderful acrobatic feats on their acclivities, rivalling the soldiers of General Wolfe, who marched up rocks that were quite perpendicular. She knew the tears which the strong mortar had shed, on first being laid between the courses, and which the trowel had forgotten to scrape away—tears which the air had hardened into imperishable durability. She knew the spider's web in the south-west angle, by the holly-bush. She was on speaking terms with the spider (a monstrous glutton, who died at last of delirium tremens, brought on by eating a bluebottle who had tipsified himself with the saccharine fermentation of fivepence-halfpenny moist, at a grocer's shop in High-street, Clapham, and so had staggered to Stockwell, to be devoured, and die). She knew that the spider did not always dwell in his web, but that he lay in wait, sometimes, in a little cavern or niche in the bricks, where a French bean peg once had been. The gravel of the playground was familiar to her, and a thrill of delight came over her when she found among the pebbles one day, a broken shell. She knew all about the miniature allotment gardens which the most meritorious among the five-and-thirty were permitted to cultivate, and where they cultivated mustard-and-cress, to be afterwards consumed on half-holiday afternoons at tea-time—mustard-and-cress which tasted hot as ginger to the tongue, and was rather uncomfortably gritty to the teeth. Into these garden-beds the young ladies frequently emptied the proceeds of their pocket-money, in the guise of small brown paper packets of seeds, presumably containing the germs of rare and gorgeous flowers, but which generally ended in disappointment, coming up in various forms of weediness or scrubbiness, but never turning out to be geraniums, or fuchsias, or anything practical. Then, was there not the speculative Miss Newton, who was always planting acorns in the fond hope that some time between their plantation and her going home for the holidays they would sprout up into giant oaks? Was there not Miss Close, the miserly boarder, who buried halfpence, nay four-penny-pieces even, in her two flower plots? And, then, Miss Furblow, the draper's daughter, had a dandy set of garden tools, all shining in iron and newly-turned wood—tools which excited the bitter envy of her companions, who had usually about one half-toothless rake, and one bent spade with a broken handle, to half a dozen horticulturists—tools which she didn't know how to use, and which brought her, at last, to signal grief and mortification?

All these things were noted by Lily; likewise, the grim little back door, fast bolted and barred, which, in former times, had communicated with Mr. Jagg's garden—the cross old gentleman next door. That door was as much an object of grave and wistful contemplation to Lily, as the Debtors' door of Newgate is to some grown people. Would it ever open? Why was it closed? What was there behind it? Mr. Jagg hated the Bunnycastles, and the Bunnycastles hated Mr. Jagg. He spoke scornfully of the five-and-thirty boarders as "a pack of young hussies," and spitefully lopped off half the spreading branches of his best cherry-tree, because a bough overhung the wall of the Bunnycastle playground. Whereupon Miss Celia Bunnycastle called in a cunning worker in iron, and caused him to erect a formidable palisade of spikes on the wall, as though to repel any attempts at midnight escalade for nefariously amative purposes by Jagg. Jagg denied the legal right of the Bunnycastles to erect this chevaux-de-frise. There was much acrimonious correspondence; the solicitors of

the rival houses were consulted; Jagg only refrained from going to law with Rhododendron House because Rhododendron House had him on the hip, in the fact of one of the maid-servants making solemn asseveration that he was not only in the scandalous habit of winking at her when she went out on errands, but had on one occasion had the unmanly brutality to tell her that she was a "duck." Had justice taken cognisance of the wretch's misdeeds, it would have been an aggravated assault case at the very least—supposing, at least, that wholesome statute to have been in force at the period. The feud at last was compromised, and the chevaux-de-frise was suffered to rust in peace. They were not very firmly fixed, and half of the spikes tumbled over into Jagg's garden: who avenged himself, let us hope, by forthwith disposing of them at marine stores.

There had been, of course, a primary cause for this envenomed quarrel, but it was wrapt in uncertainty. A teacher who had gone away knew all about it, but to the existing generation it was a mystery. Some said that Mr. Jagg, a widower with one daughter, had wished the Bunnycastles to take her on reduced terms, but that they had declined—standing out to the last that washing, music, and seat at church, should be extras. Others declared that the ladies of Rhododendron House had manifested an almost unseemly anxiety to secure Miss Jagg as an inmate; but that her uncivil parent had contumeliously declared that he would sooner send her to a charity school than to the Bunnycastles. Finally, it was darkly bruited about among the elder girls that, not so many months before, a treaty of alliance, offensive, defensive, and matrimonial, had been in contemplation between the houses of Jagg and Bunnycastle—Miss Celia being the high contracting party of the last-named family. But the treaty had come—as treaties often do—to nothing; and this was why, perhaps, the Saint Scholasticas of Rhododendron House always spoke of the crusty widower as a monster, a villain, and a base wretch; while the unfeeling Jagg, on his side, and with characteristic coarseness, declared, laying a scornful finger by the side of his ribald nose, that he had found out the whole thing was a Plant, and had declared off, in time.

This was not among the things that Lily learned; but the mention of the barred-up door reminded me of the great Bunnycastle and Jagg vendetta. It is time, however, to go in-doors. There, the things that the child learned were manifold. Into the drawing-room, and the supper-parlour beyond, she was but rarely permitted to peep, but she studied all the bedrooms—from Mrs. Bunnycastle's imposing chamber, to the less pretentious apartments occupied by the Miss Bunnycastles, and the dormitories, numbered one to five, where the five-and-thirty boarders slept on seventeen and a half iron bedsteads. The half bed was a turn-up one—an impostor—by day an escritoire. The law of kindness had, somehow, omitted to enact that the pupils should not sleep two in a bed; and Miss Furblow, the draper's daughter, was the only young lady in statu pupillari privileged to have an entire bed—it was the half one, the impostor—to herself.

There were all kinds of things to be learned in these bedrooms—things grave, and things gay. There were hours of musing evoked from huge chests of drawers—as to whether they grew there, and what they held. There were fearful speculations as to the birds and flowers on chintz draperies, and dreadful images conjured up of what, or who, might be hidden behind heavy curtains, or under Mrs. Bunnycastle's four-poster, or within the parapet of the great canopied tester. There were looking-glasses to be furtively glanced in, and then run away from; portraits and engravings on the walls to study; Moses in the Bulrushes, and Jephtha's Rash Vow; Abraham's Sacrifice, and his late Royal Highness the Duke of York in full regimentals; the Temple of Concord in Hyde Park, and the Horrible Ceremony of Suttee as performed in the East Indies; the Reverend Mr. M'Quashie, Editor of the Pædo-Baptist's Missionary Chronicle, and the Island of Corfu; with other works of art, to be pondered over. There were gowns and shawls to be detached, in imagination, from their pegs and peopled with flesh and blood. There was the great lumber-room, where all the five-and-thirty boarders' boxes were deposited when they came home for the holidays—a very caravanserai full of trunks. There was the maid-servant's room, where Lily had been woke up by the sun, and half terrified to death by the bell, on the first morning after her coming. There were chairs to jump on, and hearth-rugs to lift the corners of, and clocks to whose ticking an attentive ear was lent. There were books in cases, and books in hanging shelves, and plated candlesticks, and snuffer-trays, and two great old china mandarins, ready, on the slightest encouragement of a little finger, to loll out their tongues, and wag their peacock's feather and blue-buttoned heads in a manner wonderful, though somewhat awful, to behold. All these objects of research were, to Lily, beautiful, but perplexing. During the long hours of study, while the girls were pent up in the schoolroom, droning and gabbling, and the governesses squabbling with and girding at them, Lily was permitted, whenever she grew tired of school—which was generally about five minutes after she had taken her seat on the little stool apportioned to her—to slip out, and wander up and down the house; whose contents gave her, spark by spark, a little glimmering light. And then, in the play hours, she would ask questions innumerable, both of the girls and of the teachers, with a frank fearlessness amazing to the former, who were generally warned off from the premises of inquisitiveness as being "unladylike," and so by degrees, without any book-knowledge, Lily Floris began to learn things.

CHAPTER XVII. THE YOUNG LADIES.

Cæsar and Pompey were very much alike; especially Cæsar; by which I mean, the days at Rhododendron House. For weeks, for months, from half year to half year, they knew scarcely any change. It was a well-ordered school, and the management most methodical. The result was a dead level of uniformity, distressing to erratic minds, but delectable exceedingly to those who loved regularity and appreciated discipline.

The "getting-up bell" was the same every day; the five-and-thirty rose amidst the same yawning, stretches, and inarticulate grumblings; there were the same peevish scuffling and unsatisfactory toilette in the lavatory; the same prayer-meeting, the same homilies; that is to say, when Mrs. Bunnycastle had reached the end of the dean's volume, she began again at the beginning, and read the salutary tome through again. The boarders should properly have known those homilies by heart; but I question whether any three of them could have repeated, without book, four consecutive sentences of any one of the dean's discourses. The fact is, the time occupied in this lecture was the time chosen by the young ladies for comparing notes in low whispers on those minor cosas de España, the affairs of school-girls: for passing surreptitious articles of merchandise from hand to hand under the desks, and for "having out" sundry trifling disputes of the previous evening or the instant morning, by the interchange of sly nips and pinches, nudgings and raspings of boots against ankles. They were but children, and I dare say not more spiteful to each other than nuns in a convent. Was it not while Mrs. Bunnycastle was warming to the very close of one of the dean's most flourishing perorations, that Miss Dallwallah, the young lady connected with the Honourable East India Company's Civil Service, and who had been forwarded direct from Serampore to Stockwell with a cautionary note from her papa, stating that she had "a devil of a temper"—was it not then that this young lady, being suddenly roused to ungovernable ire by a pinch from Miss Libscombe, her neighbour, who had a remarkably ingenious knack of holding flesh between her finger and thumb, fell upon that young lady, and bit her in the arm? Mr. Drax had to be sent for; the vindictive Dallwallah's teeth were sharp, and she had drawn blood. The biter, it is regrettable to say, did not manifest the slightest compunction for the outrage. "It served Libby right," she coolly remarked; "and as for biting her arm half through, I'm sure I wish it had been her nose!" Miss Dallwallah was fifteen, and was not only insensible to the law of kindness, but too big to have her ears boxed. She was a very rich young lady; and had so many ornaments of barbaric pearls and gold, that the girls used to call her, Juggernaut. She was a parlour-boarder, and exceedingly good tempered, save when contradicted. The Bunnycastles were puzzled how to treat the case, when they were relieved from their perplexity by the sudden removal of Miss Libscombe by her mamma, who was fiercely indignant at the treatment her daughter had received, and spoke of Miss Dallwallah as "that hyæna." Miss Miller, who came of country parents, and was the great retailer of superstitious legends and folk-lore to the establishment, opined that Miss Dallwallah was mad, and that sooner or later Miss Libscombe would be seized with hydrophobia.

"She'll bark like a dog," quoth Miss Miller, "and run about biting other girls, and then her father and mother 'll be obliged to have her smothered between two mattresses."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Miss Tallboys, the eldest of the parlour-boarders, and the captainess, indeed, of the school, for she was nearly seventeen years of age. "Smothered between two mattresses indeed! What next? Why, the magistrates wouldn't allow such a thing."

"I tell you it would be done. It's the law."

"I think I ought to know," retorted Miss Tallboys, loftily. "My papa is in the commission of the peace for the county of Kent, and I'm sure he wouldn't allow such cruelty."

"Your papa is only a brewer," Miss Miller went on, in great wrath, "and magistrates are gentlemen."

"I remember his beer," little Laura Smiler broke in, maliciously. "Tallboys and Co.'s Creaming Rochester Ales. My papa used to have it, till he said they put gall instead of hops into it."

"You're an impudent little——" was beginning, in great indignation, the insulted county magistrate's daughter, when the formidable Miss Dallwallah came lounging into the room—it was a half-holiday, and the elder girls were gathered chatting round the stove—in her usual lazily defiant manner.

"Miss Miller says you're mad," broke in a chorus of shrill voices.

"Perhaps you'd like to bite me," Miss Miller herself continued, tossing her curls, which were flaxen, and turning up her nose, which was snub.

"I don't want to bite anybody," replied the Indian, quite humble now. "I *am* a mad passionate creature, and I ought to have said I was sorry I bit Lizzy Libby. I'm sorry I bit her. Only she vexed me. I'm sorry she's gone away, and if I could find out where she lived I'd take her my little enamelled gold watch, and ask her on my knees to accept it and forgive me. But she shouldn't have vexed me."

"She was a vulgar little thing," Miss Tallboys remarked, disdainfully.

"But it was very wicked of me to bite her," went on the repentant Begum. "And Mrs. Bunnycastle ought to have punished me. I deserved to be locked up in the coal-hole, with bread and water for a fortnight, only my papa's so rich, and I've always been brought up to do as I like."

"She says her papa's a magistrate," resumed

the malevolent Smiler, giving a turn to the conversation.

"*My* papa's a judge, and is the head of a district twice as big again as Yorkshire," resumed Miss Dallwallah, with tranquil dignity.

And, forthwith, all the young ladies plunged into emulous vauntings of their respective parentage, as is the custom of young ladies, and middle-aged ladies, and old ladies—to say nothing of gentlemen—with or without encouragment; and when we are old, and can no longer brag of our parents, we brag of our children, or, haply, being celibate, of our parrots or our lapdogs, our port or our pictures. And so the world goes.

Miss Tallboys, whose christian name was Grace, and who was a slender and elegant blonde; Miss Dallwallah, otherwise Juggernaut, otherwise the Begum, otherwise Lallah Rookh, otherwise the Sultana Scheherazade, otherwise a hundred other fantastic sobriquets culled from Oriental sources, and sportively bestowed upon her by her comrades, who loved her very dearly when she did not bite; and Miss Thrupp, whose parents were commercial (Thrupp and Calliper, shipbrokers, Mincing-lane), who was nearly sixteen, and who was amiable, but afflicted with red hair; were the three senior pupils in Rhododendron House. Their relatives were all wealthy, and they were, consequently, held in much consideration by the Bunnycastles. They did pretty much as they liked. They "studied," instead of learning lessons, and filled exercise-books with indifferent caligraphy, instead of repeating set tasks. They had masters for all the accomplishments, and acquired as many, or as few of them, as senior pupils at middle-class schools—remember, I am writing of the ante-"college" period—generally do. They spent their liberal allowance of pocket-money as they chose; and I hope young ladies, who have left school, will not accuse me of libelling their sex, when I record that the major portion of their revenues went in sweetstuff. Now and then, a servant-maid was bribed to smuggle in a novel from the circulating library; but, as a rule, a plentiful supply of almond rock, chocolate drops, and candied horehound, was held to be a more satisfactory pabulum than sentiment in three volumes. At happy sixteen, a girl can dream novels, and invent a hero every five minutes; but it is not enough to dream of almond rock. Sweetstuff is a thing that must be bought.

Mesdemoiselles Tallboys, Thrupp, and Dallwallah, then, condescended to take into high favour and affection the little girl who was left, quite alone, in that scholastic desert. They made a pet and a plaything of Lily Floris. Had she been a little pauper, her pretty face, guileless heart, and winning ways, would have made her a favourite, even with the workhouse matron; but Mrs. Bunnycastle's parlour-boarders were predisposed in favour of the baby pupil by mysterious hints from Miss Barbara, who, in her occasional unbosoming of gossiping confidence with the seniors, was wont to descant upon the very grand folks whom she imagined Lily's parents to be. The dazzling diamonds, and scarcely less dazzling teeth, of Mr. Blunt, were still fresh in Miss Bunnycastle's recollection, and she gave the daughter of the possessor of those valuables full credit for them. Miss Barbara's unbosomings were quite enough to make Lily, in the eyes of Miss Tallboys and her companions, a little heroine. There was something mysterious about her, they were glad to recognise. She might be a nobleman's daughter; the offspring, perchance, of a foreign prince. She could tell nothing about her mamma. Poor, little, deserted innocent. They saw it all. A forced marriage; an infant torn away from her agonised parent; an obscure retreat found for the heiress of perhaps boundless domains! They wanted fewer three volume novels smuggled in from the circulating library than ever, for Lily was a whole cabinet library of fiction in herself. But, if they required less romance, they stood in need of more sweetstuff, for they had now an associate to share it. The three friends solemnly adopted Lily, and at once proceeded to make much of her, to the no small content of the ruling powers, who, as the child was too small to stand up in a class, and was occasionally, though not often, given to fretting if no notice were taken of her, were sometimes puzzled to know where and how to bestow her. Lily profited, not only physically, but intellectually, by the patronage of the "great girls," as the three redoubtable parlour-boarders were called; for Miss Tallboys, shocked at her backwardness, began to teach her in earnest, and before she had been at Rhododendron House a year, had contrived, by kindness and caresses, to instil into her a very fair acquaintance with great A, and little a, and words in one syllable. Miss Thrupp must needs undertake to teach the mite of a thing to dance, which means that she romped about with her in most madcap fashion; and, confident of her educational mission, gravely proclaimed that she was about to "ground her" on the piano. A great many music-books, and a backgammon-board, falsely purporting to be Hume's History of England, had to be piled on the stool before Lily, mounted thereupon, could get her plump hands on a proper level with the keyboard of the rickety old practising piano (Popkinson, Great Swallow-street, Oxford-street, 1809), and her "grounding" did not extend beyond her being allowed to thump the keys, which were worn, and dented, and yellow, like the teeth of an old horse, till she began to crow with delight at the noise she made, or her instructress, laughing, and stopping her ears at the din—though a quarter of the battered clefs were dumb—bade her, with a kiss, desist. As for the Begum, Juggernaut was not behindhand in activity of patronage to the little darling. She hung strange ornaments of golden filigree round her neck. I believe she would have pierced her

ears—and her nose too, so the mischievous girls said—to hang jewelled rings in, had not that surgical operation been expressly inhibited by the scholastic home government. Debarred from the exercise of this decorative Orientalism, it was Miss Dallwallah's chief delight to curl, to brush out, and to curl again, in all sorts of ringlets, tapers, sausages, and corkscrews, Lily's soft brown locks. The child's hair curled naturally, and wanted neither tissue paper nor irons; but Miss Dallwallah was continually improving on nature, and nothing seemed more to delight her than when Lily's hair, after half an hour's elaborate frizzing, or compression under the influence of caloric, assumed the appearance of a highly ornate mop. The child submitted, and was pleased. Once, only, she gave way to a short howl, when Miss Dallwallah inadvertently touched the tip of her ear with the hot tongs, but in general she regarded the philocomic ordeal as a rare game and sport. However, one day, she thought fit to remonstrate against that which was decidedly a work of supererogation.

"My hair curl with water, Missa Lally," she said, looking up into the hairdresser's face with her large blue eyes.

"What a great stupid I am! Of course it will," exclaimed the impetuous Indian (whose petit nom, among her familiars, was "Lally"). "There, I've half spoilt your hair with these nasty hot irons. It'll curl all the wrong way now, of course. It's just like me. I never can do anything properly. I wonder I haven't bitten you into the bargain." And Miss Dallwallah, who was of an impulsive, and not a very strong-minded temperament, and who bitterly remembered her dental escapade with Miss Libscombe, would have taken refuge in tears, had she not been consoled and assured that no harm was done, by Miss Tallboys and Miss Thrupp.

It was a merry time. The "great girls" dressed Lily, and put her to bed. Had she been a squirrel, or a marmoset monkey, they could not have made more of her. As yet, the child had been deemed too small to go to church, and the homilies of the dean, before breakfast and bedtime, had been thought sufficient theological food for her; but the "great girls" begged so hard that she might be allowed to accompany them, that at last the authorities acceded to the request. To walk to church on Sunday mornings hand in hand with one or the other of her three protectresses, was to Lily the source of enormous pride and gratification. She was very good in church, although she sometimes swung her small legs—which did not reach to within a foot of the ground—in a manner to endanger the stability of neighbouring hassocks; and once or twice, on hot summer Sundays, she went to sleep, and would have tumbled off, but that Miss Tallboys caught her. But, take her for all in all, she was a most devout congregationist, and it was very pleasant to behold her gazing with a rapt wistfulness at the clergyman in the pulpit, and with interest not much less at the clerk in his desk; or nodding her head smilingly to the Psalms (I am dreadfully afraid that she manifested a desire to dance to the Thirty-third), or sitting with a very big prayer-book, of which she could not read one line, open and clutched in her hands.

MORE TRIFLES FROM CEYLON.

It is the general and correct opinion that snakes will not, as a rule, attack people except in self-defence. The following anecdote would at first seem to negative this belief, but I am inclined to think that the unusual and highly objectionable line of conduct pursued by the snake in question, is to be attributed to its having its nest somewhere in the neighbourhood.

An Eurasian sub-collector of customs was one afternoon sitting smoking his pipe, when he saw the head of a snake near the door of the room. Thinking that it was a rat-snake—a harmless animal which feeds on rats, frogs, and other small animals, and does a great deal of good in that way about a house—he contented himself with tapping against the door with a slight switch that was at hand; the snake thereupon moved off, but shortly afterwards the sub-collector again saw its head peering through a fence near the door; so he took up something and threw it in the direction of the animal, still thinking it was only a rat-snake. Instantly the snake, large and very irate, came towards him, hissing, or, as he described it, purring "like a cat." Finding his escape by the door cut off, the terrified man got into a corner behind a box, and dodged to this side and to that: the snake constantly striking out at him, but always foiled by not being able to strike over the box. The sub-collector kept hitting at the snake with his switch; but, as it was a slight one, this only exasperated the snake, and induced it to redouble its efforts. At length, a fortunate blow from the switch on the snake's head stunned it. The sub-collector did not remain to ascertain how long the state of coma lasted, but rushed out of the doorway to the sea-shore, where he found some fishermen, who accompanied him with sticks in search of his formidable foe. But he was gone, and all efforts to find him proved unsuccessful.

The circumstances had not been favourable to a minute zoological examination, but the sub-collector was of opinion that the snake was a polonga, an exceedingly venomous reptile. As before said, it had most probably a nest somewhere in the wall or ground, and thought its young were in danger. While clearing a guinea-grass plantation in my garden some weeks ago, the workmen killed one of these snakes: I was rather surprised by their doing so, for Buddhists are forbidden to take life of any kind; and although this precept is not very generally adhered to, the Singhalese show special reverence for some kinds of snakes. The cobra is particularly sacred, because he is believed to have shaded the head of Buddha from

the rays of the sun, by expanding his spectacled hood over the head of the great teacher. To show how little one thinks of snakes out here, I may mention, that while overlooking these coolies, from a little eminence, I saw a small, but apparently a venomous snake, which had been disturbed, making away. Thinking the men would object to killing it, and being too lazy to go down myself, I called out to my little boy, who was amusing himself below with his little mattock, to kill the snake; on which he walked up to it very leisurely—much more so than I approved of—chopped it into three pieces, and resumed his play as if nothing had happened. Indeed, children out here become almost so familiar with reptiles, that they have to be cautioned not to handle them too freely. Whenever a snake is discovered, their curiosity leads them to run up to it, and often they attempt to take a part in its destruction, by hitting at it with the first thing they can handle. I have sometimes to use all my authority to keep my children back. One little girl has a knack of seizing a lizard by the tail. The other day I heard shouts of laughing on the verandah. "What is it?" "Oh, Fanny caught a lizard by the tail; his tail came off, and he ran up her arm."

When a snake pursues its prey it seems indifferent to surrounding circumstances. One day, while sitting near the open door of my dressing-room, with a lady of my family, to catch the last faint puffs of the dying sea-breezes, a lizard ran into the room under our chairs, closely pursued by a snake which took the same course. My dog sprang up and pursued both into my bath-room, where I killed them close by a frog; so we compiled for our amusement the Munchausen-like, but not *entirely* incorrect tale, that the lizard pursued the frog, the snake pursued the lizard, the dog pursued the snake, and the man pursued them all. The Tamul people are very fond of this kind of retributive justice. I once literally delivered a poor owl from the jaws of death. I found a rat-snake in the act of swallowing the aforesaid owl, but it had not broken any bones. I killed the snake, and the owl got out of his mouth and flew away. I remember reading in some book on Ceylon, a good many years ago, of a frog swallowing a duck. Now, a duck may very easily swallow a frog, but the other appeared so absurdly improbable that I could not help doubting it. On mentioning my scepticism to a gentleman, whose veracity was unquestionable, he assured me that he had himself seen something of the same kind: A very large frog had seized hold of a young teal which he ambitiously attempted to swallow, but, in the endeavour to do so, he got choked, and perished miserably—he was found with the teal half way down his gullet.

During the reaping season in the Jaffna Peninsula, many accidents occur from the bites of snakes. In most cases, timely precaution would prevent fatal consequences; but, unfortunately, the friends of the wounded man are apt to resort to charms—such as waving margosa-leaves over the bite, and repeating incantations while the precious moments pass—and when they do resort to a doctor, it is too late. Some time ago, while I was standing by the Jaffna Hospital, at about sunset, a man was carried in in a basket: a common and convenient mode of transport in such cases. He had been bitten in the foot that morning; but the friends had, as usual, delayed until this late hour to seek proper attendance. There was not much swelling near the bite, but the blood was oozing from his gums and mouth; his breathing was heavy, and a stupor had come over him. Within an hour he was dead.

Sir Emerson Tennent, in his work on Ceylon, mentions, in a foot-note, a communication he received from a gentleman well known in Ceylon, regarding the cobra: "Did you ever hear of tame cobras being kept and domesticated about a house, going in and out at pleasure, and in common with the rest of the inmates? In one family, near Negombo, cobras are kept as protectors in the place of dogs, by a wealthy man who has always large sums of money in his house. But this is not a solitary case of the kind. I heard it only the other day, but from undoubtedly good authority. The snakes glide about the house, a terror to thieves, but never attempting to hurt the inmates."

The correctness of this story was recently questioned by one of the public journals in Ceylon, whereupon a correspondent maintained that it was true, and offered to point out the house and the snakes to any one who desired to satisfy himself of the fact by ocular demonstration. I had the opportunity afforded me of conversing with a most intelligent and highly respected Singhalese missionary, resident at Negombo. He told me, that while lodging in the house of one Marco Fernando, of Kattane, six miles from Negombo, he heard some commotion on the top of the bed in his room, and found that a large cobra was endeavouring to withdraw some eggs from under a hen which was sitting on the mat that formed the top or tent of the bed. Alarmed at the sight of this intruder, he ran out, and called for a stick, intending to kill it; but the inmates of the house earnestly implored him not to do so, and assured him that the snake would do him no harm. He then ascertained that it was in the habit of going in and out of the house at pleasure, and that no one molested it. It was not seen daily, but whenever there was any commotion in the house, or unusual noise, the snake would come out, and testify its displeasure at the disturbance; for instance, if a child were beaten and cried, the snake would appear and hiss, and show anger. There is nothing whatever incredible or improbable in this story. Cobras will, if unmolested, frequent houses; they like eggs; they are slow to use their fangs, unless provoked; and they are keenly alive to the influence of sound. For this last reason, doubtless, snake-charmers exhibit them in preference to all other snakes.

Singhalese believe in the transmigration of souls; when a snake thus takes up its abode within or near a house soon after the death of one of its former inmates, the survivors believe that their deceased relative has returned in this form. In the case I have specially alluded to, it was the belief of the family that the cobra was their deceased grandfather, or great grandfather.

Snakes evidently learn to know certain persons, and probably nothing but strong provocation would induce a snake to hurt those whom it daily saw, and who left it unmolested.

In the natural order of things the snake would, if a female, increase and multiply, and the young snakes would undergo many risks from cats, fowls, &c., and I therefore see no reason to be much surprised at another thing my informant told me: which was, that he saw about the premises, parts of small cobras, which had apparently been killed, and that he made use of this fact in argument with the people of the house, to show that the snake could not be their deceased brother, the cobra being a lady. My Negombo friend told me that when stationed at the southernmost extremity of the island, in the stronghold of Buddhism, he frequently saw cobras emerge from holes in the middle of the day, and walk most unconcernedly among the washermen at a particular spot. The washermen would on these occasions address the snakes in most respectful terms, and remind them that dirty clothes were impure things, far too unclean for them to walk on. The snakes would pass by, in maiden meditation fancy free, and go into some crab-hole or rat-hole; but they never molested the people.

Snakes have many enemies. There is the great sea eagle, which may be seen of an evening sailing homeward to his nest high up in some large tree by the tank side, with a snake in his beak, which he has drawn from the sea most likely; for there are snakes in the sea and the lakes, as well as on the land. Then the fowls, and other domestic animals of that kind, scratch up their eggs now and then; and cats will, if they do not actually attack large snakes, do much towards keeping them away from a house. But the greatest of all their enemies is the brave little mungoos, as the name is generally written. It is almost a pity to spoil so pretty a fable, and one so generally believed, as that which tells how there is a herb to which the mungoos resorts from time to time during its encounters with its foe, the virtues of which herb counteract the snake's venom; but the unfortunate fact is,—there is no such herb.

If a mungoos and a snake be allowed to fight it out in a closed room, the result will, as a rule, be that the snake is killed and the mungoos comes off unscathed. The real truth is, that through its wariness and agility the mungoos does not get bitten. If a mungoos be tied up, and the snake allowed to bite it, the mungoos will die, in spite of all the herbs in the country.

I do not know what to say of snake-charming. No doubt some of the snakes owned by snake-charmers are venomous, and instances are recorded of charmers inducing snakes to come out of holes where it is difficult to believe they could possibly have had the opportunity of secreting tamed snakes. My own belief is, that for one genuine snake-charmer there are a hundred charlatans, who impose upon griffins with the connivance of their servants.

Of all ugly animals, the alligator is the ugliest. There is not a single redeeming feature in his countenance. His eyes speak nothing but selfishness and malignity; his jaws are suggestive of rapacity and cruelty; from tail to snout, he is loathsome and unclean. Let the lion or the tiger claw me and tear me to pieces; let the elephant knock me about like a football; let the buffalo gore and pound me into a jelly; but do not let the alligator carry me away alive, deliberately drown me, keep me in a corner down below the waters amidst the gnarled roots of some overhanging tree, feast his eyes on my body until it is in the state which suits his horrid taste, and then feed on me at his leisure. I never have any compunction about shooting at an alligator wherever I meet him. Yet, no doubt, he has his use, if we only knew it. The river near where I live, is full of these creatures. No later than Saturday last before this writing, while rowing about with my children, the boatman pointed out a "kimbula," as they call them, quite close by us on the shore, in some swampy ground. My gun was loaded with shot, which I proceeded to exchange for ball, and I must do the alligator the justice to say that he gave me quite time enough; perhaps he was turning over in his own mind what a delicious meal one of those fat little creatures in the boat with me would make; but the patience of even an alligator has its limits, and by the time I was quite ready for him, my friend had concluded it was time to be off, so he quietly sunk under the waters, and I saw him no more. Although there are many alligators in this river, able and willing to carry off a man, still there are places where men, women, and children, bathe all day with impunity, while there are unquestionably alligators not far from them. I asked my horse-keeper one day, as we were passing one of these bathing-places, how it was that the people were not carried off? He answered, because the place had been charmed. It appears there are alligator charmers, as well as snake and shark charmers. I take the fact to be, that the alligator is a most cowardly brute, and will not come where several persons are splashing about, or where he knows they are in the habit of congregating. What he likes, is, to catch a poor fellow all alone, to make away with him. But it sometimes happens that an alligator near a ford will, when once he has acquired a taste for human flesh, become very daring. There is a place, some thirty or forty miles hence, where an alligator recently killed a poor fellow; and a few days after, as a man was standing in quite shallow water, washing his face at the same

place, the brute suddenly made a dash at him and seized him. If my memory serve me, this man managed somehow to get away from him; but such was the terror inspired, that the people in the neighbourhood would not venture any longer to dip for water as before, but erected a high platform to stand on. The alligator has been seen to come below, and cast a wistful glance upward at the persons standing there; whether on those occasions the interesting creature shed "crocodile tears," my informant, an officer in the Engineers, did not tell me. Looking over the inquest reports filed in my court, I observe the following entry, which I give as it stands, with the Singhalese idiom thrown into the English: "No. 25. Held on the twenty-fourth of April, 1863.—The deceased was a boy about eight or nine years old. He died on the twenty-third of April, 1863, by attack of an alligator, whilst he was bathing in company with another boy at the ferry called Hambantottewatte-Tottoo Palle. Some of the relatives of the deceased were examined, and they have said that they had seen the alligator struggling with the deceased on the surface of the water, shortly after the deceased was missing." To this is added the following memorandum by the coroner at the time being: "The body of the boy was afterwards recovered, with only a slight wound on the thigh."

It is matter of wonder, when one considers the absurdly small canoes in which the natives often paddle about on the rivers and lakes, that the alligators do not more frequently attack the fisherman when alone near their haunts, and drag him out of the canoe. I have not authenticated the story, but I have been told that an alligator did, not long ago, so seize a man on the Batticaloa lake, where the alligators are known to grow to an enormous size, and carry him off: while for some distance the unfortunate man's cries were distinctly heard along the shore. The following story I have authenticated—the hero of the tale is alive, and, after hearing of his adventure from two or three persons, I went to him and heard it from his own lips. He was the servant of a civilian at the station, and was one evening washing his feet by the side of the river bounding his master's compound, when an alligator seized him by the calf of the leg and dragged him to the bottom of the river, which, at the place where he had been standing, suddenly deepens close to the bank. He struck his head against the bottom, and was half stunned. For some reason best known to himself, the alligator relinquished his hold as soon as the man reached the bottom, and he and the alligator came together to the surface. When they arrived there, the alligator was not holding him, but he was holding the alligator. They parted company, each seeking his natural element, and the poor fellow has the marks of the alligator's teeth deeply impressed both on his calf and on the hand with which he was washing his leg when seized.

It is believed by the natives that the alligator cannot devour its food like other animals; that after having seized any animal, he carries it away and secrets it in a hole; and that when partially decomposed, he takes a piece into his jaws, rises to the surface, throws it up, and then catches it. How far this is correct I cannot personally say, though I have it from authority; but I know that the proper way to set an alligator hook, is to suspend it when baited, from a forked twig stuck into the ground, so that the bait hangs temptingly over the water for the alligator to snap at. In this way I have seen seven tank alligators, or rather crocodiles, hauled out of one tank in one morning, the hooks having been set overnight; but this was a small haul compared with some I have heard of. River alligators are not so easily caught. The natives in the north entertain the belief that a bullet has a peculiarly fatal effect on an alligator if previously coated with lime, and I have been told by a very close observer who would receive and communicate any fact of the kind only after satisfactory evidence, that if a little ball of lime be placed in the mouth of one of the young alligators one sometimes catches with the hand in a tank, it will immediately turn over on its back, and show signs of great distress. One more anecdote about alligators, and I have done with them. Two large cows, of English breed, were feeding close to the banks of a river in the district of Negowlo, when an alligator seized one of them by the head; the other cow, which was coupled, after the custom of the country, to the one which was seized, did all in her power to resist the efforts of the foe to drag them into the water, but in vain; after a violent struggle both cows were carried off. They belonged to the magistrate of the district, and my informant, accompanied by some Singhalese sportsmen, went up the river in pursuit. About a mile distant from where the cows had been seized, in a nice sequestered spot, they discovered the alligator. He had beaten down and smoothed for himself a comfortable bed of water-rushes, and here he had laid the carcases of the two cows, while he, stretched at full length, was enjoying himself in the sunshine, and gloating over his expectations. The hunters stole quietly upon him, and one of them fired at his head, hitting him in what is called the "false eye." His aim was true, but the alligator had time to plunge into the water, and there he sank at once to the bottom. They then began poking their boat poles into the mud, and at last felt the alligator below, apparently lifeless. The question now was, who should go down and inquire after him? An undertaking which everybody politely offered to leave to somebody else. At last one man, who had primed himself for the occasion, said he would go down and bell the cat. So he descended, and soon came up again, declaring that the alligator was dead. Ropes were then given him, and he went down again and attached them to the carcase. With very great

difficulty they succeeded in hauling it to shore, when it was found to be eighteen feet long.

These anecdotes about snakes and alligators may possibly convey to my reader the impression that life must be fearfully insecure in the tropics; but although it would be easy to multiply the number of such stories greatly, it must by no means be supposed that people in Ceylon are in constant peril from these animals. Habit soon teaches them what to avoid. They soon learn that if they leave a box on the ground, the white ants will devour its contents, so they always place their boxes on little trestles, made for the box. They know that if they allow a heap of dry rubbish to remain near a house, snakes and other reptiles will frequent it, and so they don't permit such accumulations to exist. They bear in mind that snakes, centipedes, and other such creatures, are generally to be found among the roots of trees, and they therefore never sit down in any suspicious-looking place. They know that alligators are generally to be found in rivers, and so they do not venture to bathe in them without first making inquiry. It very rarely happens that any European is killed by a snake or alligator; in fact, during the whole of a long residence in the island, I have never heard of a single white man's death occurring from either of these causes.

FRIENDLY OR UNFRIENDLY?

In the clamour which has been raised by some not wholly disinterested persons against the measure which Mr. Gladstone (whom the public have strong reason to trust) proposes to introduce under the title of the Government Annuities Bill, it seems to have been forgotten that the idea is not entirely new, but that statesmen and philanthropists have for a long time desired to promote the growth of Industrial Assurance. Thus, with a view to induce the working classes to make provision against the decline of their health and strength, the legislature has sanctioned the sale of deferred annuities on comparatively easy terms. So far back as 1807, Mr. Whitbread introduced a bill for the establishment of post-office savings-banks, and of a Poor's Insurance Fund in connexion with the post-office. The preamble of that bill stated that "Whereas such of the poor as are desirous of making out of their earnings some savings, as a future provision for themselves or their families, are discouraged from so doing by the difficulty of placing out securely the small sums which they are able to save; and it would tend to promote habits of industry and frugality, and to encourage the poor to make such provisions, if an establishment were formed in which they might invest their money with security and advantage." Mr. Whitbread, like Galileo and one or two other social benefactors, was a little before his time, and his bill was thrown out; but the spread of consideration for others, and the growth of practical knowledge, have proved his wisdom; the present government has succeeded in establishing post-office savings-banks; and the bill now before parliament aims at the establishment of a Poor's Insurance Fund.

Before, however, taking the subject in hand, the legislature has, from time to time, encouraged friendly societies, by granting them various privileges, in the hope that such societies, by affording to the poor the means of making a secure provision against sickness or old age, or for their families, would tend to lessen the charge on the rate-payers throughout the country. Friendly societies, however, have, to a very great extent, failed to perform what was expected of them. The reports of Mr. Tidd Pratt, the registrar of friendly societies, contain very alarming accounts of the failure of some, and the insolvency of others; and these accounts are abundantly explained by the testimony of independent authorities. These, among whom are the first actuaries of the day, are by no means reticent in their opinions. From one of them we learn, that while benefit societies amount in number to many thousands, and profess to guarantee to their members allowances in case of sickness or death, they are founded for the most part on such erroneous data, and are constituted so unsoundly (besides being managed by persons deficient in practical experience, and often of equivocal respectability), that they have generally been found productive of more disappointment than advantage to their unfortunate subscribers. Another gentleman, whose opinion on all matters connected with life assurance is acknowledged to be of the highest value, observes, with regard to friendly societies, "It has been established by the failure of great numbers of clubs from one end of the kingdom to the other, that many societies are imperfectly organised, and that, in their present state, they are little more than a delusion and a snare to the working classes. The industrious man contributes in youth and in the prime of life, to a society which fails when age and infirmity overtake him. All the successful business of this country is carried on by the co-operation of master and man, and the first evident objection to the benefit club is, that in general it implies the dissociation of these two classes in a business as difficult as any of the trades of the country, in a business which is carried on by elaborate tables, calculated by actuaries, involving the probabilities of life, the accumulation of funds at compound interest, and the secure investment of money during the whole life of a generation of men. One of these clubs undertakes what no large assurance society is willing to undertake, and, without an actuary, plays with the certified edge tools of actuaries."

The causes of the failure of these friendly societies may be assumed to be:

First. The insufficiency of the area over which their operations extend; the members being not sufficiently numerous to afford a just average of health and life.

Second. The insufficiency of the premiums charged for health and life assurance.

Third. The inequitable assessment of such premiums.

Fourth. Unskilful, and sometimes wasteful and extravagant, management.

With regard to the first cause, it is stated by competent authorities that it is impossible to secure a just average without a large body of members. The splitting up into five or six societies, of a number of persons scarcely sufficient to form one society of moderate extent, is considered totally to destroy all prospect of fair average results. No society with a small number of members can be looked upon as safe. The insufficiency of the number of members in petty friendly societies, to form an average, and the ignorance of the managers, must be fatal obstacles to their prosperity: while sickness allowance, and old age benefits, can only be safely guaranteed by institutions dealing with a large number of members. The second and third causes of failure have frequently been commented on by statistical writers, who have pointed out the errors of the tables used by friendly societies—tables which are for the most part taken up by the society at haphazard, and used merely because they have been used by some other society, without any regard to the special circumstances of the case to which they are applied. Not merely are the rates charged often insufficient, but they are frequently inequitable. The managers of the society fix upon a premium for an assurance without data, and without reason. Mr. Tidd Pratt, giving evidence before a committee of the House of Commons in 1853, declared that the tables of a very large majority of friendly societies are never certified by an actuary; and further, that more than one half of the ordinary benefit societies like to have, and will have, one single rate of payment for all persons. They do not understand one man's paying so much a year according to the age at which he insures, and another man's paying so much more or less, according to the age at which *he* insures.

The fourth cause of failure is so plain as to require but little remark. It is assuredly unnecessary to enlarge on the fact that benefit societies are frequently ruined by unskilful or extravagant management. Many societies are beneficial only to the publican at whose house the meetings are held, and who, in too many instances, is the only intelligent member. Of late years, certain societies, which have taken the name and guise of friendly societies, but which are, in reality, speculative insurance offices of the lowest class, have appealed largely to the working classes. These societies have secured an ample area for their operations, they have established agencies in every part of the country, they have obtained a sufficient number of subscribers to give them a proper average of health and life; but they have lost the chief and original characteristic of friendly societies. The popular idea of a friendly society is, that it is a brotherhood, a body of men united for the purpose of bringing their savings into a common fund, which common fund is to be administered by common agreement of the members. How far this popular idea of a friendly society has been realised by ordinary benefit clubs, it would be difficult to say; but, assuredly, it has not been realised by some of the largest societies (with the most overwhelmingly philanthropic titles) throughout the kingdom. In such societies, the members, poor, uneducated, unacquainted with one another, and incapable of union, are scattered by thousands over the whole face of the country. The governing body, consisting at most of some half-dozen individuals, reside in a central spot, and exercise an absolute and unfettered control over the funds. Consider the temptation to extravagance and mismanagement!

And what does the government, through Mr. Gladstone its Chancellor of the Exchequer, propose to do? By the bill before the House, the government proposes to give to the working classes those facilities for the secure investment of their money which the real friendly societies have, in many cases, been unable to give, and which the real friendly societies and the so-called speculative friendly societies, have, in the vast majority of instances, failed to give. The government has the vast area for want of which numberless honest friendly societies have failed; and it is removed from those temptations to extravagance and dishonesty which have ruined, or are ruining, many large societies. The means afforded to the working classes at present, are wholly inefficient. The large London assurance offices, while thoroughly accessible to the upper and middle classes, have, save in one or two instances, declined to do business of sufficiently small amount to be within the means of the industrious host. Nor does an allowance in case of sickness form part of the scheme of any large London office. That the object which the government has in view, is desirable and easy of attainment, has been testified by many eminent writers on life assurance, one of whom, after recommending the collection from the labourer of weekly or monthly premiums of one shilling, or any multiple of one shilling, for the purpose of securing to him at death, or at an advanced period of life, an amount varying with the entrance age, says, "In the hands of a paternal government, life assurance, on such a basis, might be made a national duty."

Of course the bill has been objected to and opposed. A cry is easily raised; demagogues in want of a topic, have inflated their lungs, and impecunious directors of shaky societies have uttered solemn bellows of admonition. What are the objections to the measure? "That it will teach the people to rely on the government rather than on their own exertions." This is simply stark nonsense. The government is not about to give a bonus or a bounty to the people! It is not about to furnish them with the money which they must pay before they become benefited. It merely offers them the means of investing their premiums with absolute safety; the premiums themselves will

still have to be earned by the exertions of the assured.

"That it will interfere with the rights of the people and curtail their freedom." This, again, is stark nonsense. The people will not be compelled to insure with the government: which merely offers them one more mode of investing their savings, and leaves it to themselves to accept or reject the offer.

"That the cost of the scheme will have to be borne by the public at large, for the benefit of the few who avail themselves of it." Mere wind! The expenses of the scheme will be covered by the premiums, and will thus be borne by the assured, precisely as such expenses are always borne by the assured in ordinary assurance offices.

"That the government will be exposed to various kinds of fraud, especially to fraud by personation." This is a sounding point of objection, but one which seems altogether groundless. In the first place, the temptation to fraud will be far less than in the case of ordinary insurance offices. The utmost amount that could be gained by fraud on the government, would be one hundred pounds; but a successful fraud on an ordinary assurance office might put several thousand pounds into the pockets of the perpetrators. In either case, extensive collusion and fine and delicate instruments would be required to complete the fraud; and one hundred pounds in possibility will not purchase extensive collusion, or fine and delicate instruments.

Fraud by personation has been largely talked of, but without much reason. If by personation be meant the substitution of a healthy life for a diseased life on the first medical examination, the post-office, to whose agency the carrying out of the measure is entrusted, will have ample means of identifying the person whom it subjects to medical examination with the person whom it intends to assure. If by personation be meant a false representation of the death of some one whose life has been assured, it may be answered that before a claim to a policy can be set up, somebody must be buried, and that the dead man must, to the satisfaction of the post-office, be identified with the assurer.

It has been urged, and will doubtless be urged again any number of times, that the postmasters are unfit for the work which is to be entrusted to them, and that they are not qualified to be life insurance agents. Perhaps the best reply to this objection, is, that the postmasters are at present, in a very large number of cases, agents to respectable assurance offices, and do more for those offices than they will be required to do for the post-office. It is easy to perceive that the agency of the postmasters, after the passing of the bill, will be still more valuable to assurance offices than it is at present. The work entrusted to the postmasters by the post-office, will be of the simplest kind, and will be analogous to work already performed by numbers of them.

A further great grievance has been that the effect of this measure will be to take from the friendly societies the most profitable, and to leave them only the least profitable, part of their business. This is not true. Every part of the business of a friendly society with a sufficient area, may be made profitable. There is a law of sickness as well as a law of mortality; and the premiums for health insurance may be as fairly apportioned to the chances of sickness, as the premiums for life assurance are to the chances of death.

The government will take away from the friendly societies, not that part of their business which is necessarily the most profitable, but that part of their business which enables them to conceal their insolvency for the longest period, and which for the longest period facilitates a lavish and wasteful expenditure.

AT DAYBREAK.

O DO not wake, for so thou look'st most true,
The veined lids have veiled thy glances wild,
And thy pale cheeks have caught the rosy hue
Sleep gives a little child.
Blight, and warm breath of spring, sweet food, and murderous bane,
Oh, my lost love! when shall we meet again!
Never again shall foot of mine
Tread within a home of thine;
Never again shall smile of thine
Bless or blast a house of mine.

Forgive me, sweet one, that I cannot bear
The terrible fate thou willed'st. Blind despair,
Making a hell of what was once my heart,
Drives me before her, and so, sweet, we part.
And yet I thank thee for those bitter blisses
That once thou didst bestow—thy cruel kisses;
And for the passionate words of love once spoken;
And bless thee, bless thee, bless thee, with the heart thou'st broken!
Oh, little Agatha, dark to me is the light
That bids me leave thee! So, the dawn
That grudges wretched souls these shrouding hours of night
And brings the sunshine back to souls at ease,
Wakes shiveringly, and shivering sigh the trees.
One kiss, O child! one more! now sleep, for I am gone.

WHEN I AM DEAD.

BRING no flowers rare
To deck my bed;
The violets grow above
The hearts of those they love.
Hang no garlands there
When I am dead.

No woful human groan,
No friends to weep;
But where I'm lying low
Let the soft spring winds blow,
And doves make lulling moan
And coo me to my sleep.

Lay no stone above
My lonely head.

Lay no stifling tombstone there;
The flowers will spring up thick and fair;
The violets love
The early dead.

ASSAULT AND BATTERY.

"Ha! ha!" said he, with a sardonic laugh.

"What do you mean?" I asked, indignantly.

"Ha, ha!" repeated he, more sardonically than before; "it's a hoax;" and then he roared with delight. "He" was the booking-clerk at the Faversham railway station, "I" was a passenger just alighted and inquiring whether there would be any special return trains to London, and "it" was a paragraph about a night attack by volunteers, which had appeared in the newspapers.

Now, though a hoax in itself is a most delightful thing, requiring great subtlety of wit to invent, and great delicacy of humour to carry through, still, when after travelling more than fifty miles, at great trouble and inconvenience, for a special object, you find you have mistaken an asinine bray for the genuine bugle-call, you are apt to be annoyed. So I was beginning to wax very wroth, and to feel anything but pleasantly disposed towards Faversham, its volunteers, local population, railway, and belongings in general, when I was accosted by the station-master, from whom I learned that, though the numbers engaged would not be so large as had been stated in the newspaper paragraph, the night attack would certainly be made, that from the condition and drill of the men the operation would probably be very creditably carried out, and that, though there were no special return trains to London—indeed, I seemed to be the only stranger in the place—there was a capital hotel where I should be taken excellent care of.

I found the hotel, forming one side of the queer little market square, and immediately confronting the lopsided little town-hall, with its big-faced clock and its supporting pillars forming a little arcade, in which, probably, the merchants of Faversham most do congregate. I found the landlord astonished at the idea of a stranger coming so far to see so little, but, undoubtedly, delighted at the chance of driving me in an open trap to the scene of action, and of beholding the military display. I ordered my dinner, and I set out to do Faversham. Easily done! Such quaint, old-fashioned, gable-ended houses, with all their woodwork newly grained, with plate-glass substituted for the old diamond panes, with the date of erection, in many cases, neatly picked out as something to be proud of; and with a perpetual current of business pouring into them, bespeaking trade and prosperity; such clean broad trimly-kept streets, stretching here away into a pleasant country, there away to new red-brick buildings, suggestive of benevolent townsfolk and heavy legacies; such a charming old church, with a singular spire springing from a curious arch; such a picturesque schoolhouse close by, with such a ringing, fresh, girlish voice within, heard through the open window singing—oh so sweetly!—the Evening Hymn; such a capital range of red-brick houses, with stone mullions and copings judiciously introduced, with bay-windows thrown out here, and twisted chimneys put on there, and with, in the middle, a large handsome evidently public building, with big doors and those fine old mediæval hinges, which make such a show, but which are not particularly useful. Of a passing rustic, or, rather, semi-rustic, an agricultural labourer with a maritime flavour, I asked what that (pointing to it) was. The person looked at me, for a moment, seriously, then grinned, and said "Faversham." "Of course, I know; but *that*," pointing again. A longer stare, then "Houses," was the reply. "Of course, but *that*," with an unmistakable forefinger. "A-ah!"—long drawn out sigh of relief—"Institoot." The Albert Institute, well endowed, well supported, well attended, well conducted. Faversham's tribute to the memory of the Prince Consort, and a very sensible tribute too.

Dinner despatched, I found the landlord awaiting me in an open phaeton, and away we sped to the scene of the operations, some four miles distant. Our passage through the streets was impeded by the streams of people all pouring out in the one direction, old and young, women and children, all full of spirits. Sitting on the box by the landlord, I had been wondering at the perpetual shouts of laughter we occasioned, at the never-failing roar of delight with which our appearance—like that of some popular actor—was greeted, and I was about to ask my companion for an explanation, when, turning round for an instant, I saw a shock-headed ragged man solemnly trotting by the side of our trap, to which he was holding with one hand. "Who's your friend?" I asked the landlord. "Oh!" said he, without turning, "'tis only Buzzy Billy!" Being to my shame ignorant of this celebrity, I was compelled to press the question further, and then learned that Buzzy Billy was the "softy," the omadhaun, in plain English the idiot, of the town, who, like most idiots, had a certain amount of nous which fitted him for work which no one else cared to do, and that he was attached as our retainer to hold the horse and look after the trap while we were further afield, with the certainty that no amount of excitement could beguile him from his duty. Which result, on such an occasion, could not have been predicated of any other male in Faversham. As running footman Buzzy Billy discharged his duties well, distributing slaps of the head among the boys with great impartiality, with a hand about the size and colour of a shoulder of mutton, invariably meeting all suggestions of a "lift" with the sarcastic remark, "Get 'long wi' 'ee. They wouldn't let *me* ride, much less such as you!"

As we rode along, I learned from the landlord that the night's proceedings had been originated by a gentleman, the proprietor of extensive

powder mills in the neighbourhood, who, at his own cost, had raised among his own workmen two batteries of artillery, numbering one hundred and twenty men, who are provided by him with uniform and accoutrements, whose expenses are paid, and from whose wages he never makes any deduction when drills, gun-practice, and military evolutions call them from their regular work. These artillerymen, constituting the Second Kent Artillery Volunteers, were reckoned among the crack corps of the county, and of this I had an opportunity presently of judging, as we drove past the grounds of their founder, who is also their major, where they were drawn up in line—as well-built, trim, well-equipped a body of men as one could wish to see. These were the repelling force; the attacking body, consisting of the Sheerness Dockyard Battalion, had preceded us, and we could occasionally catch the refrain of a tune played by their band far ahead. By this time a bright clear moon had risen, the air was fresh and frosty, and the ground firm and in capital marching condition; the road was filled with pedestrians, all chatting and laughing, with here and there a stray horseman, or a chaise-cart, or a van laden with company. If there had been sunlight and dust, and hundreds more vehicles, it would have looked rather like the road to the Derby; as it was, it dimly resembled the outskirts of a country fair. At last we began to approach our destination; the horse and chaise were left in Buzzy Billy's charge; and we proceeded on foot across a marshy piece of ground to a big barn, the battery about to be assaulted. A little inspection showed that this big barn was surrounded by a ditch, that it had heavy earthworks, and that through the embrasures loomed suspiciously the muzzles of two twenty-four-pounder guns. Its occupants had not yet arrived, so we followed the fortunes of the enemy, and pursued our way across the marsh-ground until we came to Ore Creek, in which lay the three little ship-launch gunboats, under cover of whose fire the attack was to be made. The scene was a strange one; to the left, aground like a stranded whale, stood the hull of a brig, now used as the coast-guard station, and tenanted by the chief boatman, who, with his family and friends, was calmly standing in the bows and watching the operations. From the shore, gun detachments, all plainly visible in the moonlight, were embarking to board the gunboats under the lee of the coast-guard ship; the commander of the attacking force was silently mustering his men, dealing out to them their ammunition, and giving them their final instructions. A knot of the local population, principally boys and women (the majority were up at the battery), stood by in excitement which bordered very closely on trepidation; far out to the left one could perceive the track of the little River Swale, and the twinkling lights of the Isle of Sheppey; while the horizon on the left was cut by the black spars of a collier brig, curiously suggestive of yard-arm execution, and of immediate readiness for the reception of those smugglers who once abounded in these parts, and of whose exploits Thomas Ingoldsby has been the pleasantest narrator.

While the gun detachments were silently stealing towards the gunboats, which, mastless, black, immobile, lay like three porpoises floating side by side in the creek, the attacking force having been properly rested, were divided into two parties: one to advance against the battery in front: the other to harass it in flank. All seemed to promise well for the onslaught; when, far away in the direction of the battery was seen a flash, followed by a tremendous roar which woke all the echoes of the neighbourhood; the invaded were on the look-out, and had commenced the action. Forthwith the gunboats came to the support of their men, and one after another the little six-pounders blazed away with an unintermittent fury which spoke admirably for the manner in which they were served. Under their cover the two portions of the attacking force advanced, firing volleys upon the supports of the defenders, who were promptly called out. So admirably was all this done, that it gave one (I should think) a very fair notion of real warfare; the roar of the guns and the rattle of the small-arms were incessant; through the thick clouds of smoke which rolled over the marshes came hoarse words of command, all ending in that peculiar bellow which ought to convey a great deal to the soldier, as it is utterly unintelligible to the civilian; happily there were no groans of the wounded, the substitute being the faint shrieks and Lar'-bless-me's of the female portion of the spectators. At first, the attacking party carried all before it, and when it arrived at the battery, beat off the supports, swarmed into the ditch, through the embrasures, and up into the battery itself, to find the enemy retreated and the guns spiked. But, having learned from a prescient bystander that it was not at all unlikely a reverse would take place, I made my way by a détour to the top of a hill, where I passed the retreated Kent Artillery Volunteers comfortably ensconced behind a masked battery, hidden, like Tennyson's Talking Oak, "to the knees in fern," and awaiting the advent of the invaders, who, by this time, had left the captured battery and were pursuing their successful career.

These devoted youths advanced until they were very unpleasantly near the covered muzzles of the guns, when they were received with a salvo which, had the guns been shotted, certainly would have finished the attacking force. They wavered, halted, and then at word of command executed a strategic movement of retreat; which, in plain English, looked very like running away. Then the invaded ran after them; then the invaded's supports fired after them; then the retreating attackers faced about and fired on the advancing repellers; then the gunboats began to boom again, the battery guns began to blaze away at the gunboats, and the people who were running away, ran away a little, turned round and fired, and the people who were

running after them, ran forward a little and fired; and so on, with a perpetual roaring, and shouting, and running, until the attackers had been beaten off, and were supposed to have retired to their gunboats, and to be in full sail down Ore Creek.

Now, did the local population, finding they were neither hanged nor shot nor blown up, as most of them expected, overcome the trepidation under which during the attack they had laboured, and shout great shouts and roars of joy (such as Kentish lungs can alone give vent to), and of applause to both parties engaged. Now, did the invaders return from the Creek, and prove by their actual presence that they had not sailed away; and now did they and the repellers, both somewhat grimy and sulphurous-smelling, fraternise and march back in amity to Faversham. Where, in the assembly-rooms, at the expense of the generous major, was set forth a great repast of beef and bread and beer, which was freely and immediately pitched into by all present; and then there was as much interchange of opinions on the night's work, of homely jokes and pleasant banterings, as full mouths and sharp appetites would permit. Now, did I return to the coffee-room of the hotel, and finish my night's adventure with a glass of grog, and a chat with such a specimen of the cheery honest quaint old English naval officer as it had never been my good luck to meet before, and as I had hitherto believed was only to be found in the nautical novels of Captain Marryat.

The night attack at Faversham was a good thing, well conceived, ably planned, well carried out. All drill and no amusement makes Jack (or anybody else) a dull volunteer. To read we must learn to spell, but to be always at spelling, even in words of four syllables, would be a dreary task. The formation of fours, the marching in sections and subdivisions, the manual and platoon, the judging distance drill, &c., are all admirable initiatory exercises; but, to keep interest alive in the men, to throw something like a fascination round the pursuit, you must give them something more than this. This something more is to be found in periodical reviews, in out-camping, in sham-fights, in such a special manœuvre as is here recorded. All that was done at Faversham was on a miniature scale, but the well-arranged programme was kept to the letter, and was carried out with signal success. May it be the prelude to larger operations of like kind!

DANISH LUMINARIES.

All is not darkness in the North, either atmospherically or intellectually. The genial and brilliant summers of Scandinavia find their parallel in the bright and energetic genius of the people. Linnæus, the Swede, will ever be a charmed name for all who love and admire the works of Nature. It is not so many years ago that Miss Bremer's novels, in their English dress, took us by surprise. Thorwaldsen, the Danish sculptor, has combined the grace and more than the strength of Canova, with a sublimity which the Italian never attained. The Niebuhrs, father and son, one an adopted, the other a native Dane, have achieved a world-wide reputation.

The early Danish writers are so picturesque and national that they form a special literature by themselves; we will now, therefore, solely glance at a few of the modern authors. The Danish poets best worth mentioning in the latter portion of the eighteenth century are Ewald, Baggesen, and Wessel. The first, an admirer and a pupil of Klopstock, led a life of constant crosses and contrarieties. Fond of good cheer but without a penny in the world, full of enthusiasm but depressed by melancholy, he excited himself by reading Robinson Crusoe, and had no means of travelling. He enlisted for a soldier, but could not rise beyond the ranks. With great difficulty his family purchased his discharge, and he then fell in love with a girl who married another suitor. He consoled himself with poetry, which was his real vocation. After a very moderate drama called Adam and Eve, he wrote, in 1770, Rolf Krage, which was the first national tragedy possessed by Denmark, but whose merit was scarcely appreciated. His drama, Balder, was more successful; but, with his usual untoward ill-luck, his clever comedies, the Brutal Claqueur, Harlequin Patriot, and Maids and Bachelors, obtained small applause until after his death. His reputation as a Danish classic, rests on his lyric and religious poetry, while his name has been rendered permanently popular by the patriotic song, which may be loosely rendered:

King Christian stood at the foot of the mast,
  The whirlwind round him blew,
He whirled his sword, and the heads of the Goths
  From their shoulders in numbers flew.

The whirlwind roared, the smoke arose,
  Still flashed his sword on high;
Cleaving each helmet, it left not the time
  To utter one dying cry.

"Help! help!" they cried. "Escape by flight
  Who can, from slaughter! In vain
We struggle to stem by our strength, the might
  Of Christian, the valorous Dane."

The gallant seaman is here celebrated rather than King Christian the Fourth; for maritime power has been the idol of the Danes ever since Bishop Absalom, in 1184, took the command of five hundred Danish vessels.

As a complete contrast to Ewald, Baggesen (who died in 1826) could reply affirmatively to Talleyrand's favourite question to young diplomatists, "Are you lucky, sir?" Beginning life as a copyist, he obtained first a scholarship, and then a professorship in the university. He became director of the Copenhagen Theatre, and set up as a traveller in France and Germany. Although he was the man of his day, it is doubtful whether he will be the man of to-morrow. Vapid idylls will hardly carry him down to posterity, any more than twenty volumes of correctly written verse and prose published by

his two sons after his death. He partook largely of the satirical vein which characterises Voltaire, Wieland, and Sterne. He was a virulent opponent of the romanticism which was then invading literary Denmark, and ridiculed, in his Playful Stories, the ancient Scandinavian traditions. Notwithstanding which, he described in inflated style the massacres of the first French revolution, which he witnessed. On the first of January, 1795, he wrote, "What a heavy-laden waggon has this night crossed the threshold of eternity! I remained up till midnight, in order to behold the curtain fall on the terrible spectacle of the year 1794, and I think I can still hear the crash of the gates closing behind its wheels, and the ground resounding at the fall of its heavy load of dead bodies. Whilst hell triumphed, heaven wept; and the tears which fell from the eyes of the Genius of Humanity had nearly extinguished the bonfires of the demons. Suddenly, the devils burst forth into peals of despairing laughter, in the presence of the corpse of Robespierre himself, and the angels ceased to weep. When all was over, the Genius of Humanity exclaimed, 'Let Ahrimanes repose at last.'"

Wessel, born in Norway, but educated in Denmark, led an irregular and poverty-stricken life as teacher, translator of French pieces for the theatre, and journalist. He wrote for a magazine called Your Servant Otiosis, stories in verse, which are still read with pleasure. In his Love Without Stockings, he gaily parodied the long tirades and Alexandrines of the French classical drama, at the same time that he profited by it to polish his style and his versification. The plot of his burlesque is this. A journeyman tailor is in love with Grethe, a fat merry girl who eats raw ham and pickled herring. During his absence, a rival arrives. Grethe has a confidante who treats her like a queen, and only addresses her in pompous hexameters. The rival also has a confidant who calls him "lord." The journeyman tailor, on his return, wishes to marry Grethe. But there is one grand obstacle; he has no stockings to go to church in. At this sad announcement, the heroine faints. Unfortunately, the confidante, who always has her wits about her, advises the loving tailor to steal a pair of stockings from his rival. He follows the evil counsel, and returns in triumph to his princess, who receives him like a conqueror. But the theft is discovered. The lover kills himself, refusing to survive his disgrace. The lady kills herself, refusing to live without him. The rival kills himself, because he still loves Grethe; and the two confidants, out of sheer ennui, kill themselves because there will be no more confidences for them to receive.

The subsequent epoch is completely filled by Œhlenschläger's celebrity. His death took place so recently as the 21st of January, 1850. He was born, in 1779, at Fredericksburg, a royal residence near Copenhagen, of which his father was steward. He was originally intended for the navy, but the intention failed to take effect. He appeared without success on the Copenhagen stage, entered the university, and eighteen months afterwards passed his examinations in philology and philosophy. He then published a volume of poetry on subjects taken from the Scandinavian Mythology, which attracted considerable attention. Travels which he made, with government assistance, gave him an opportunity of describing France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. His patrons succeeded in obtaining for him the professorship of Æsthetics (Polite Literature), which he held until his death. In this capacity, his society was much courted by literary travellers. In 1818, he was appointed member of the Academic Senate, and Chevalier of the Order of the Danebrog.

Œhlenschläger produced more than thirty successful pieces for the theatre, and, for several years, filled the office of co-director of the Copenhagen Theatre Royal. His heroic and epic poems, The death of Balder, Hrolf Krake, and The Gods of the North, were less popular with his countrymen than his dramas. Among his numerous productions may be cited, Hakon Jarl, a picture of the struggle between Christianity and Odinism; Palnatoke, a famous Sea-king of the tenth century; Axel and Valborg, a celebrated middle-age legend; and Socrates, the last scene of which Œhlenschläger had read to him on his death-bed. These grave productions were diversified by a sprinkling of lighter lucubrations—comedies, operas, and fantastic sketches.

The following—the Punishment of Cowardice—is from his Gods of the North:

"Loki and his companions followed the god Thor, and they arrived all together before Helheim (the abode of Hela or Death). Thor knocked at the gates with his magic lance; they opened, and the god and his suite entered into the kingdom of shadows.

"They passed through numerous and winding vaults. Their footsteps produced a muffled sound, and a thousand echoes repeated the noise of their arms.

"After traversing innumerable galleries, they reached a sort of passage so narrow and so low that they were obliged to stoop and march in single file. At the extremity of this passage, they perceived a vast circular grotto, lined with hewn stone, and dimly lighted.

"In it, there sat along the walls in several rows, men with pale and livid countenances, trembling in every limb. A cold sweat streamed down their foreheads. They were wrapped in winding-sheets fastened round their loins by serpents.

"In a recess of the cavern was a throne built up of human bones, on which sat Hela, the queen of the dead. Half black, half white, she regarded the funeral assembly with menacing looks.

"Her crown was composed of skulls. In her right hand, by way of sceptre, she held an immense thigh-bone, still damp with corruption, freshly torn from a skeleton, and bleached in the moonbeams.

"A cadaverous odour pervaded the place. The silence was only interrupted by the sighs and groans which, from time to time, escaped from the dead. Three torches placed in the middle of the grotto, and guarded by three skeletons armed from head to foot, cast a faint bluish light round. The horrors and the agony of death were everywhere perceptible; but nowhere was a drop of blood to be seen.

"Thor, with a smile of disdain on his lips, stepped forward, and said to the dead men who were shuddering with fear, 'Cowards, pusillanimous wretches, remain in your torments to all eternity. May your lot be that of every man who has not the courage to follow me!'

"'Contemptible creatures! You were afraid of wounds and death, and now Hela makes you suffer endless tortures. You never dared to show yourselves in the combats where heroes measure lance with lance. You lived, only to tremble. Tremble then eternally!'

"Approaching Hela, Thor continued, 'Pale woman, your punishments are just; but do not suppose that I am come to pay you homage. I have lost my way. Tell me, if you know, whither to direct my steps in order to reach the domains of King Utgarde.'

"Pointing with her finger to the issue of the grotto, Hela replied in a sepulchral voice, 'Behold your road; quit my sombre dwelling; your brilliant health and strength offend my sight.'"

It must be confessed that this reads not unlike Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogene, in which "the worms they crept in, and the worms they crept out, and did something or other his temples about;" nor is it surprising that its author should be attacked by Baggesen, the antagonist of romanticism; all of which did not prevent Œhlenschläger from becoming a great favourite with the Danish public.

Heiberg probably owes the greater part of his reputation to his introduction of the Vaudeville to Danish theatrical literature; but he has also proved his strength in criticism, philosophy, lyric poetry, and the drama. One of his first pieces, The Potter (1814), cleverly illustrates one of the most wide-spread superstitions of the middle ages. A potter, Walter, is puffed up with ideas of grandeur, and falls in with a diabolical friend, Ulf, who, on the principle of "Set a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride to the devil," supplies him with twice as much money as suffices to ruin him. Walter, suddenly enriched, gives way to unbounded extravagance, until at last, poor and wretched, he is driven to seek afresh, the assistance of his treacherous purveyor.

"Ah! it's you, Walter?" says Ulf, with feigned surprise. "How are matters going with you?"

"Thank you; only so-so."

"What do you mean? Do you want for anything? I see. I guess you have spent all your money?"

"I have, but I don't wish for any more."

"Why, then, did you come to this place?"

"I will tell you the truth. I did leave with the intention of again having recourse to your treasures. But in the midst of these mountains I found myself so secluded from the world, that I forgot every earthly desire; and when at the hour of midnight I beheld the waterfall glittering in the moonlight, it seemed as if I should be committing a crime against Heaven were I to take your money."

"What nonsense you are talking! What connexion is there between the waterfall, midnight, the moon, and my money?"

"You are right, but such was my impression."

"I am very glad you came to that conclusion, because I have nothing to give you to-day."

"You have nothing to give me?"

"Absolutely nothing. My master found out that I had taken several thousand ducats. He deprived me of the management of his treasures, and not a crown now passes through my hands. It seems you led a jolly life in the capital. I just now met a person belonging to the court, who told me that he once saw you passing through the streets in company with your wife, and surrounded by such a crowd of valets that he took you for one of the leading ministers."

"Really!"

"He then told me you had given such a brilliant ball that he had called the king's attention to it."

"Is it possible!"

"And he has no doubt that, in consideration of your splendid style of living, you will be rewarded with letters of nobility."

"How delighted my wife Bridget would be if she could only hear you!"

"I am told, in confidence, that at your next masked ball it is the king's intention to be present. You have only to give the ball next week, and the whole of the court will be there."

"What an honour! What a happiness! Yes, next week. As soon as I get back home, I will begin the requisite arrangements. I will spare for nothing—but what am I talking about? I have no more money!"

"Ah! I forgot. That makes all the difference."

"What is to be done?"

"Give up the scheme."

"Impossible. If you could only, just for this once, procure me a few ducats——"

"I cannot; and even if I could give you five thousand ducats, it would not be sufficient for the occasion. No, give up the scheme. Sell your house and furniture, and betake yourself to your former trade."

"But what will the king say? What will the court say?"

"They will say that the potter's fortune went up like a rocket and came down like its stick."

"No, no; I should be disgraced for ever. I must find some means of getting out of the difficulty."

"Listen, my friend; I think I still can help you if you will strictly follow my directions."

"Tell me, O tell me, dear Mr. Ulf; you have only to say the word, and I obey."

"Very well. I will now confess that I have the good luck to possess, not only a few wretched bags of ducats, but more money than you could spend in all the rest of your days, were you to live as long as Methusalem and as magnificently as Solomon. My master has granted me permission to dispose of this money as I please, with the condition that it can be given only to those who will invoke my master."

"Is that all? Go on. Who is your master?"

"You know very well; the proprietor of the mines. It is an honour for you to be patronised by him, for he is a person of distinction and enormous wealth. He is always dressed in brilliant scarlet."

"I have a horror of everything that is red in clothing."

"Get rid of your foolish prejudices. While confiding in my master's power, and promising to serve him, you ought to swear eternal hatred to his enemies."

"Naturally. But, my dear Ulf, if one of my friends should be one of his enemies?"

"A wretched consideration."

"Granted. Go on."

"Repeat after me, word for word, what I say:—I hate light, and love darkness."

"I cannot say that."

"In that case I cannot help you."

"I will out with it: I hate light, and I love darkness."

"I hate the brightness of the moon."

"But how pleasant moonlight is by night."

"Pleasant or not, what does it matter?"

"I hate the brightness of the moon."

"I hate gay flowers."

"I am particularly fond of flowers, especially roses; but since you insist: I hate gay flowers."

"I hate the blue sky."

"Ah! that is too strong. What can be more beautiful than the deep blue sky?"

"Am I to keep my money?"

"No. What does it signify what I think of the sky? It is a matter of taste: I hate the blue sky."

In this way poor Walter is led on to curse mankind, virtue, and the Christian religion, and to invoke the Evil Spirit, and to pawn his soul. He walks off with five hundred thousand ducats, and also with the anguish of remorse. His wife dies, his children die. He returns to his seducer, and offers to restore the money; but all in vain. Ulf causes him to be guarded by demons, while he goes in search of Satan, to fetch his prey. But his daughter Rose, whom he believed to be lost, obtains the protection of Titania, the queen of the fairies, who rescues him from the powers of darkness.

Andersen has quite as much right to claim the title of poet as of novelist and dramatic writer. He especially displays the national sentiments of tenderness and family affection. His Improvisatore is an animated description of artist life in Italy. His O. T. is an attractive picture of Danish life and landscapes, as seen in the island of Funen. Take the following sample of his style:

"Grandmamma is very old; she is wrinkled and has snow-white hair, but her eyes are bright and mild. She tells the most charming tales, and she wears a silken dress with large flowers, which makes a rustling sound as it grazes against the walls. Grandmamma knows a great deal; the reason is, that she has lived a long time, long before papa and mamma, that is certain. Grandmamma has a book of canticles with a silver clasp, and she is often reading in that book. In the middle of the volume there is a rose, flattened and dried, which is not so beautiful as the roses in the glass; and yet grandmamma smiles happily when she looks at it, and her eyes fill with tears. Why does grandmamma gaze in this way on the dried flower in her book of canticles?

"You want to know? Every time that one of grandmamma's tears falls on the flower, its stem uprises, its colours resume their brightness, it fills the chamber with its perfume; and the walls of the room fall, as if they were floating clouds, and all around grandmamma stretches the green magnificent forest, where the sunbeams make their way between the foliage. At that moment grandmamma is quite young; she is a charming girl with light brown hair and fresh cheeks, brilliant and beautiful; no flower is fairer. By her side a young man is seated, tall and well-made, who offers her a rose, and she smiles. Grandmamma no longer smiles in that way—yes, indeed, her smile is still the same.—He is gone. A thousand visions and a thousand thoughts have taken his place. The handsome young man is gone; the rose is laid in the book of canticles; grandmamma falls back in her large arm-chair; she looks at the faded rose in the book. Grandmamma is dead!

"She was laid in a black coffin, wrapped in a white linen shroud. How beautiful she was! Her eyes were closed, but every wrinkle had disappeared. She lay at full length, with a smile on her lips, and adorned by her silver and venerable locks. No one was afraid to come and see the corpse; she was still grandmamma, so good and so dearly beloved. The book of canticles was placed in the coffin, beneath her head; such was her wish. The rose was in the book. And then they buried grandmamma. On her grave, close to the church wall, they planted a rose-bush, whose roses waved in the wind, and said, 'It is pleasant to bathe in the dew and the moonbeams. If we are the fairest flowers, a friendly hand will come and gather us for the prettiest girl. Let us summon all our brightness and all our perfume.'

"And the nightingale heard what the roses said; and he sang in honour of the rose which the young girl placed in her book of canticles, keeping it faithfully until her once fresh cheeks were wrinkled.—It is so beautiful to live in the memories of the past!—And while the nightingale sang, the church organ intoned the har-

monious psalms that were in the book that lay beneath the head of the dead, and the moon shone in all her splendour."

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER IV. THE "LAGO D'ORTA."

Leaving Loyd to compose his letter, we will follow Calvert, as, with vigorous stroke, he rushed his light boat through the calm water, leaving a long bright line of bubbles in his wake. Dressed in his blue flannel shirt and white trousers, a gay bunch of roses stuck jauntily in the side of his straw-hat, there was an air of health, vigour, and dash about him, to which his full bright eye and up-turned moustache well contributed. And, as from time to time he would rest on his oars, while his thin skiff cleaved her way alone, his bronzed and manly face and carelessly waving hair made up a picture of what we are proud to think is eminently British in its character. That is to say, there was about him much of what indicated abundance of courage, no small proportion of personal strength, and a certain sort of recklessness, which in a variety of situations in life is equivalent to power.

To any eye that watched him, as with scarce an effort he sent his boat forward, while the lazy curl of smoke that rose from his short pipe indicated ease, there would have seemed one who was indulging in the very fullest enjoyment of a scene second to none in Europe. You had but to look along the lake itself to see the most gorgeous picture of wooded islands and headlands glowing in every tint of colour, from the pure white of the oleander to the deep scarlet of the San Giuseppe, with, in the distance, the snow-capped Alps of the St. Bernard, while around and close to the very water's edge peeped forth little villas, half smothered in orange-blossoms. Far over the lake came their floating perfumes, as though to lend enchantment to each sense, and steep the very soul in a delicious luxury.

Now, as Calvert felt the refreshing breath of the gentle air that stirred the water, he was conscious of a glorious morning, and of something generally grand in the scene about him; but that was all. He had little romance—less of the picturesque—in his nature. If his eyes fell on the lake, it was to fancy the enjoyment of cleaving through it as a swimmer; if he turned towards the Alps, it was to imagine how toilsome would prove the ascent; how deeply lay the snow on the wheels of the diligence; how many feet below the surface were buried the poles that once marked out the road. But even these were but fleeting fancies. His thoughts were seriously turned upon his own future, which opened no bright or brilliant prospect before him. To go back again to India, to return to the old regimental drudgery, or the still more wearisome existence of life in a remote detachment; to waste what he felt the best years of life in inglorious indolence, waiting for that routine promotion that comes associated with the sense of growing old; and to trace at last the dim vista of a return to England, when of an age that all places and people and things have grown to be matters of indifference. These were sad reflections. So sad, that not even the bright scene around him could dispel. And then there were others, which needed no speculation to suggest, and which came with the full force of documents to sustain them. He was heavily in debt. He owed money to the army agent, to the paymaster, to the Agra Bank, to the regimental tailor, to the outfitter—to every one, in short, who would suffer him to be a debtor. Bonds, and I O's, and promissory notes, renewed till they had nigh doubled, pressed on his memory, and confused his powers of calculation.

An old uncle, a brother of his mother's, who was his guardian, would once on a time have stood by him, but he had forfeited his good esteem by an act of deception with regard to money, which the old man could not forgive. "Be it so," said he; "I deemed my friendship for you worth more than three hundred pounds. You, it would seem, are differently minded; keep the money, and let us part." And they did part, not to meet again. Calvert's affairs were managed by the regimental agent, and he thought little more of an old relative, who ceased to hold a place in his memory when unassociated with crisp inclosures "payable at sight."

"I wonder what would come of it if I were to write to him; if I were to put it to his humanity to rescue me from a climate where, after all, I might die—scores of fellows die out there. At all events, I detest it. I could say, 'My leave expires in October, if you would like to see me once more before I quit England for ever, for I am going to a pestilential spot—the home of the ague and jungle fever, and heaven knows what else—your sister's son—poor Sophy's child.' That ought to touch him." And then he went on to think of all the tender and moving things he could write, and to picture to himself the agitation of him who read them; and thus speculating, and thus plotting, he swept his light boat along till she came close in to shore, and he saw the little villa peeping through the spray-like branches of a weeping ash that stood beside it. "Higher up," cried a voice, directing him. "Don't you know the landing-place yet." And, startled by a voice not altogether strange to him, he looked round and saw the old lady of the Rhine steamer, the same who had snubbed him at Coblentz, the terrible Miss Grainger of the lost writing-case. It was some minutes before he remembered that he was performing the part of boatman, and not appearing in his own character. Resolved to take all the benefit of his incognito, he lifted his hat in what he fancied to be the true Italian style, and taking a basket in each hand, followed the old lady to the house.

"It is three days that we have been expecting

you," said she, tartly, as she walked briskly on, turning at times to point a sarcasm with a fierce look. "You were punctual enough on Tuesday last, when you came for your rent. You were to the very minute then, because it suited yourself. But you are like all your countrymen—mean, selfish, and greedy. As to those pears you brought last, I have struck them off the account. You may bring others if you please, but I'll not pay for rotten fruit no more than I will for three journeys to Como for nothing—do you hear me, sir?—three journeys to look after my writing-desk, which I lost on the Rhine, but which I know was forwarded here, though I can't get it. Is it worth your while to answer? Oh, of course, your old excuse—you are forgetting your English—it is so long since you were a courier. You knew quite enough, when I came here, to make me pay more than double the proper rent for this miserable place, without a carpet, or——" Just as she reached thus far, she was joined by one of the young girls, whose looks had vastly changed for the better, and was now a strikingly fine and handsome girl.

"Milly," said the old lady, "take this man round by the kitchen-garden, and get some one to take the fruit from him, and be sure you count the melons."

Not sorry for the change of companionship, Calvert followed Milly, who, not condescending to bestow a look on him, moved haughtily on in front.

"Leave your baskets yonder, my good man," said she, pointing to a bench under a spreading fig-tree; and Calvert, depositing his burden, drew himself up and removed his hat. "My aunt will pay you," said she, turning to go away.

"I'd far rather it had been the niece!" said he, in English.

"What do you mean? Who are you?"

"A stranger, who rather than suffer you to incur the privation of a breakfast without fruit, rowed across the lake this morning to bring it."

"Won't he go, Milly? What is he bargaining about?" cried Miss Grainger, coming up.

But the young girl ran hastily towards her, and for some minutes they spoke in a low tone together.

"I think it an impertinence—yes, an impertinence, Milly—and I mean to tell him so!" said the old lady, fuming with passion. "Such things are not done in the world. They are unpardonable liberties. What is your name, sir?"

"Calvert, madam."

"Calvert? Calvert? Not Calvert of Rocksley?" said she, with a sneer.

"No, ma'am, only his nephew."

"Are you his nephew, really his nephew?" said she, with a half incredulity.

"Yes, madam, I have that very unprofitable honour. If you are acquainted with the family, you will recognise their crest;" and he detached a seal from his watch-chain and handed it to her.

"Quite true, the portcullis and the old motto, 'Ferme en Tombant.' I know, or rather I knew your relatives once, Mr. Calvert;" this was said with a total change of manner, and a sort of simpering politeness that sat very ill upon her.

Quick enough to mark this change of manner and profit by it, he said, somewhat coldly, "Have I heard your name, madam. Will you permit me to know it?"

"Miss Grainger, sir. Miss Adelaide Grainger"—reddening as she spoke.

"Never heard that name before. Will you present me to this young lady?" And thus with an air of pretension, whose impertinence was partly covered by an appearance of complete unconsciousness, he bowed and smiled, and chatted away till the servant announced breakfast.

To the invitation to join them, he vouchsafed the gentlest bend of the head, and a half smile of acceptance, which the young lady resented by a stare that might have made a less accomplished master of impertinence blush to the very forehead. Calvert was, however, a proficient in his art.

As they entered the breakfast-room, Miss Grainger presented him to a young and very delicate-looking girl, who lay on a sofa propped up by cushions, and shrouded with shawls, though the season was summer.

"Florence, Mr. Calvert. Miss Florence Walter. An invalid come to benefit by the mild air of Italy, sir, but who feels even these breezes too severe and too bracing for her."

"Egypt is your place," said Calvert; "one of those nice villas on the sea slope of Alexandretta, with the palm-trees and the cedars to keep off the sun;" and seating himself by her side in an easy familiar way, devoid of all excess of freedom, talked to her about health and sickness in a fashion that is very pleasant to the ears of suffering. And he really talked pleasantly on the theme. It was one of which he had already some experience. The young wife of a brother-officer of his own had gained, in such a sojourn as he pictured, health enough to go on to India, and was then alive and well, up in the Hill country above Simlah.

"Only fancy, aunt, what Mr. Calvert is promising me—to be rosy-cheeked," said the poor sick girl, whose pale face caught a slight pinkish tint as she spoke.

"I am not romancing in the least," said Calvert, taking his place next Milly at the table. "The dryness of the air, and the equitable temperature, work, positively, miracles;" and he went on telling of cures and recoveries. When at last he arose to take leave, it was amidst a shower of invitations to come back, and pledges on his part to bring with him some sketches of the scenery of Lower Egypt, and some notes he had made of his wanderings there.

"By the way," said he, as he gained the door, "have I your permission to present a friend who lives with me—a strange, bashful, shy creature, very good in his way, though that way isn't exactly my way; but really clever and well read, I believe. May I bring him? Of course I hope

to be duly accredited to you myself, through my uncle."

"You need not, Mr. Calvert. I recognise you for one of the family in many ways," said Miss Grainger; "and when your friend accompanies you, he will be most welcome."

So, truly cordially they parted.

CHAPTER V. OLD MEMORIES.

When Calvert rejoined his friend, he was full of the adventure of the morning—such a glorious discovery as he had made. What a wonderful old woman, and what charming girls! Milly, however, he owned, rather inclined to the contemptuous. "She was what you Cockneys call 'sarcy,' Loyd; but the sick girl was positively enchanting; so pretty, so gentle, and so confiding withal. By the way, you must make me three or four sketches of Nile scenery—a dull flat, with a palm-tree, group of camels in the fore, and a pyramid in the back ground; and I'll get up the journal part, while you are doing the illustrations. I know nothing of Egypt beyond the overland route, though I have persuaded them I kept house in Cairo, and advised them by all means to take Florence there for the winter."

"But how could you practise such a deception in such a case, Calvert?" said Loyd, reproachfully.

"Just as naturally as you have 'got up' that grand tone of moral remonstrance. What an arrant humbug you are, Loyd. Why not keep all this fine indignation for Westminster, where it will pay?"

"Quiz away, if you like; but you will not prevent me saying that the case of a poor sick girl is not one for a foolish jest, or a——"

He stopped, and grew very red, but the other continued:

"Out with it, man. You were going to say, a falsehood. I'm not going to be vexed with you because you happen to have a rather crape-coloured temperament, and like turning things round till you find the dark side of them." He paused for a few seconds, and then went on: "If you had been in my place this morning, I know well enough what you'd have done. You'd have rung the changes over the uncertainty of life, and all its miseries and disappointments. You'd have frightened that poor delicate creature out of her wits, and driven her sister half distracted, to satisfy what you imagine to be your conscience, but which, I know far better, is nothing but a morbid love of excitement—an unhealthy passion for witnessing pain. Now, I left her actually looking better for my visit—she was cheered and gay, and asked when I'd come again, in a voice that betrayed a wish for my return."

Loyd never liked being drawn into a discussion with his friend, seeing how profitless such encounters are in general, and how likely to embitter intercourse; so he merely took his hat and moved towards the door.

"Where are you going? Not to that odious task of photography, I hope?" cried Calvert.

"Yes," said the other, smiling; "I am making a complete series of views of the lake, and some fine day or other I'll make water-colour drawings from them."

"How I hate all these fine intentions that only point to more work. Tell me of a plan for a holiday, some grand scheme for idleness, and I am with you; but to sit quietly down and say, 'I'll roll that stone up a hill next summer, or next autumn,' that drives me mad."

"Well, I'll not drive you mad. I'll say nothing about it," said Loyd, with a good-natured smile.

"But won't you make me these drawings, these jottings of my tour amongst the Pyramids?"

"Not for such an object as you want them to serve."

"I suppose, when you come to practise at the bar, you'll only defend innocence and protect virtue, eh? You'll, of course, never take the brief of a knave, or try to get a villain off. With your principles, to do so would be the basest of all crimes."

"I hope I'll never do that deliberately which my conscience tells me I ought not to do."

"All right. Conscience is always in one's own keeping—a guest in the house, who is far too well bred to be disagreeable to the family. Oh, you arch hypocrite! how much worse you are than a reprobate like myself."

"I'll not dispute that."

"More hypocrisy!"

"I mean that, without conceding the point, it's a thesis I'll not argue."

"You ought to have been a Jesuit, Loyd! You'd have been a grand fellow in a long black soutane, with little buttons down to the feet, and a skull-cap on your head. I think I see some poor devil coming to you about a 'cas de conscience,' and going away sorely puzzled with your reply to him."

"Don't come to me with one of yours, Calvert, that's all," said Loyd, laughing, as he hurried off.

Like many men who have a strong spirit of banter in them, Calvert was vexed and mortified when his sarcasm did not wound. "If the stag will not run, there can be no pursuit," and so was it that he now felt angry with Loyd, angry with himself. "I suppose these are the sort of fellows who get on in life. The world likes their quiet subserviency, and their sleek submissiveness. As for me, and the like of me, we are 'not placed.' Now for a line to my cousin Sophy, to know who is the 'Grainger' who says she is so well acquainted with us 'all.' Poor Sophy, it was a love affair once between us, and then it came to a quarrel, and out of that we fell into the deeper bitterness of what is called 'a friendship.' We never really hated each other till we came to that!"

"Dearest, best of friends," he began, "in my broken health, fortunes, and spirits, I came to this place a few weeks ago, and made, by chance, the acquaintance of an atrocious old woman

called Grainger—Miss or Mrs., I forget which—who is she, and why does she know *us*, and call us the 'dear Calverts,' and your house 'sweet old Rocksley?' I fancy she must be a begging-letter impostor, and has a design—it will be a very abortive one—upon my spare five-pound notes. Tell me all you know of her, and if you can add a word about her nieces twain—one pretty, the other prettier—do so.

"Any use in approaching my uncle with a statement of my distresses—mind, body, and estate? I owe him so much gratitude that, if he doesn't want me to be insolvent, he must help me a little further.

"Is it true you are going to be married? The thought of it sends a pang through me, of such anguish as I dare not speak of. Oh dear! oh dear! what a flood of bygones are rushing upon me, after all my pledges, all my promises! One of these girls reminded me of your smile; how like, but how different, Sophy. Do say there's no truth in the story of the marriage, and believe me—what your heart will tell you I have never ceased to be—your devoted,

"Harry Calvert."

"I think that ought to do," said he, as he read over the letter; "and there's no peril in it, since her marriage is fixed for the end of the month. It is, after all, a cheap luxury to bid for the lot that will certainly be knocked down to another. She's a nice girl, too, is Sophy, but, like all of us, with a temper of her own. I'd like to see her married to Loyd, they'd make each other perfectly miserable."

With this charitable reflection to turn over in various ways, tracing all the consequences he could imagine might spring from it, he sauntered out for a walk beside the lake.

"This box has just come by the mail from Chiasso," said his host, pointing to a small parcel, corded and sealed. "It is the box the signora yonder has been searching for, these three weeks; it was broken when the diligence upset, and they tied it together as well as they could."

The writing-desk was indeed that which Miss Grainger had lost on her Rhine journey, and was now about to reach her in a lamentable condition—one hinge torn off, the lock strained, and the bottom split from one end to the other.

"I'll take charge of it. I shall go over to see her in a day or two, perhaps to-morrow;" and with this Calvert carried away the box to his own room.

As he was laying the desk on his table, the bottom gave way, and the contents fell about the room. They were a mass of papers and letters, and some parchments; and he proceeded to gather them up as best he might, cursing the misadventure, and very angry with himself for being involved in it. The letters were in little bundles, neatly tied, and docketed with the writers' names. These he replaced in the box, having inverted it, and placing all, as nearly as he could, in due order, till he came to a thick papered document tied with red tape at the corner, and entitled Draft of Jacob Walter's Will, with Remarks of Counsel. "This we must look at," said Calvert. "What one can see at Doctors' Commons for a shilling is no breach of confidence, even if seen for nothing;" and with this he opened the paper.

It was very brief, and set forth how the testator had never made, nor would make, any other will, that he was sound of mind, and hoped to die so. As to his fortune, it was something under thirty thousand pounds in Bank Stock, and he desired it should be divided equally between his daughters, the survivor of them to have the whole, or, in the event of each life lapsing before marriage, that the money should be divided amongst a number of charities that he specified.

"I particularly desire and beg," wrote he, "that my girls be brought up by Adelaide Grainger, my late wife's half-sister, who long has known the hardships of poverty, and the cares of a narrow subsistence, that they may learn in early life the necessity of thrift and not habituate themselves to luxuries, which a reverse of fortune might take away from them. I wish, besides, that it should be generally believed their fortune was one thousand pounds each, so that they should not become a prey to fortune-hunters, nor the victims of adventurers, insomuch that my last request to each of my dear girls would be not to marry the man who would make inquiry into the amount of their means till twelve calendar months after such inquiry, that time being full short enough to study the character of one thus palpably worldly-minded and selfish."

A few cautions as to the snares and pitfals of the world followed, and the document finished with the testator's name, and that of three witnesses in pencil, the words "if they consent," being added in ink, after them.

"Twice fifteen make thirty—thirty thousand pounds—a very neat sum for a great many things, and yielding, even in its dormant state, about fifteen hundred a year. What can one do for that? Live, certainly—live pleasantly, jovially, if a man were a bachelor. At Paris, for instance, with one's pleasant little entresol in the Rue Neuve, or the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré, and his club, and his saddle-horses, with even ordinary luck at billiards, he could make the two ends meet very satisfactorily. Then, Baden always pays its way, and the sea-side places also do, for the World is an excellent World to the fellow who travels with his courier, and only begs to be plucked a little by the fingers that wear large diamonds.

"But all these enchantments vanish when it becomes a question of a wife. A wife means regular habits and respectability. The two most costly things I know of. Your scampish single-handed valet, who is out all day on his own affairs, and only turns up at all at some noted time in your habits, is not one-tenth as dear as that old creature with the powdered head and the poultice of cravat round his neck, who only bows when the dinner is served, and grows apoplectic if he draws a cork.

"It's the same in everything! Your house

must be taken, not because it is convenient or that you like it, but because your wife can put a pretentious address on her card. It must be something to which you can tag Berkeley-square, or Belgravia. In a word, a wife is a mistake, and, what is worse, a mistake out of which there is no issue."

Thus reasoning and reflecting—now, speculating on what he should feel—now, imagining what "the World" would say—he again sat down, and once more read over Mr. Walter's last will and testament.

CHAPTER VI. SOPHY'S LETTER.

In something over a week the post brought two letters for the fellow-travellers. Loyd's was from his mother—a very homely affair, full of affection and love, and overflowing with those little details of domestic matters so dear to those who live in the small world of home and its attachments.

Calvert's was from his cousin Sophy, much briefer, and very different in style. It ran thus:

"Dear Henry——"

"I used to be Harry," muttered he.

"Dear Henry,—It was not without surprise I saw your handwriting again. A letter from you is, indeed, an event at Rocksley.

"The Miss Grainger, if her name be Adelaide (for there were two sisters) was our nursery governess long ago. Cary liked, I hated her. She left us to take charge of some one's children—relatives of her own, I suspect—and though she made some move about coming to see us, and presenting 'her charge,' as she called it, there was no response to the suggestion, and it dropped. I never heard more of her.

"As to any hopes of assistance from papa, I can scarcely speak encouragingly. Indeed, he made no inquiry as to the contents of your letter, and only remarked afterwards to Cary that he trusted the correspondence was not to continue.

"Lastly, as to myself, I really am at a loss to see how my marriage can be a subject of joy or grief, of pleasure or pain, to you. We are as much separated from each other in all the relations of life, as we shall soon be by long miles of distance. Mr. Wentworth Graham is fully aware of the relations which once subsisted between us—he has even read your letters—and it is at his instance I request that the tone of our former intimacy shall cease from this day, and that there may not again be any reference to the past between us. I am sure in this I am merely anticipating what your own sense of honourable propriety would dictate, and that I only express a sentiment your own judgment has already ratified.

"Believe me to be, very sincerely yours,

"Sophia Calvert."

"Oh dear! When we were Sophy and Harry, the world went very differently from now, when it has come to Henry and Sophia. Not but she is right—right in everything, but one. She ought not to have shown the letters. There was no need of it, and it was unfair! There is a roguery in it too, which, if I were Mr. Wentworth Graham, I'd not like. It is only your most accomplished sharper that ever plays 'cartes sur table.' I'd sorely suspect the woman who would conciliate the new love by a treachery to the old one. However, happily, this is his affair, not mine. Though I could make it mine, too, if I were so disposed, by simply reminding her that Mr. W. G. has only seen one half, and, by long odds, the least interesting half, of our correspondence, and that for the other he must address himself to me. Husbands have occasionally to learn that a small sealed packet of old letters would be a more acceptable present to the bride on her wedding morning than the prettiest trinket from the Rue de la Paix. Should like to throw this shell into the midst of the orange-flowers and the wedding favours, and I'd do it too, only that I could never accurately hear of the tumult and dismay it caused. I should be left to mere imagination for the mischief, and imagination no longer satisfies me."

While he thus mused, he saw Loyd preparing for one of his daily excursions with the photographic apparatus, and could not help a contemptuous pity for a fellow so easily amused and interested, and so easily diverted from the great business of life—which he deemed "getting on"—to a pastime which cost labour and returned no profit.

"Come and see 'I Grangeri' (the name by which the Italians designated the English family at the villa), it's far better fun than hunting out rocky bits, or ruined fragments of masonry. Come, and I'll promise you something prettier to look at than all your feathery ferns or drooping foxgloves."

Loyd tried to excuse himself. He was always shy and timid with strangers. His bashfulness repelled intimacy, and so he frankly owned that he would only be a bar to his friend's happiness, and throw a cloud over this pleasant intercourse.

"How do you know but I'd like that?" said Calvert, with a mocking laugh. "How do you know but I want the very force of a contrast to bring my own merits more conspicuously forward?"

"And make them declare when we went away, that it is inconceivable why Mr. Calvert should have made a companion of that tiresome Mr. Loyd—so low-spirited and so dreary, and so uninteresting in every way?"

"Just so! And that the whole thing has but one explanation—in Calvert's kindness and generosity; who, seeing the helplessness of this poor depressed creature, has actually sacrificed himself to vivify and cheer him. As we hear of the healthy people suffering themselves to be bled that they might impart their vigorous heart's blood to a poor wretch in the cholera."

"But I'm not blue yet," said Loyd, laughing. "I almost think I could get on with my own resources."

"Of course you might, in the fashion you do

at present; but *that* is not life—or at least it is only the life of a vegetable. Mere existence and growth are not enough for a man who has hopes to fulfil, and passions to exercise, and desires to expand into accomplishments, not to speak of the influence that every one likes to wield over his fellows. But, come along, jump into the boat, and see these girls! I want you; for there's one of them I scarcely understand as yet, and as I am always taken up with her sick sister, I've had no time to learn more about her."

"Well," said Loyd, "not to offer opposition to the notion of the tie that binds us, I consent." And sending back to the cottage all the details of his pursuit, he accompanied Calvert to the lake.

"The invalid girl I shall leave to your attention, Loyd," said the other, as he pulled across the water. "I like her the best; but I am in no fear of rivalry in that quarter, and I want to see what sort of stuff the other is made of. So, you understand, you are to devote yourself especially to Florence, taking care, when opportunity serves, to say all imaginable fine things about me—my talents, my energy, my good spirits, and so forth. I'm serious, old fellow, for I will own to you I mean to marry one of them, though which, I have not yet decided on."

Loyd laughed heartily—far more heartily than in his quiet habit was his wont—and said, "Since when has this bright idea occurred to you?"

"I'll tell you," said the other, gravely. "I have for years had a sort of hankering kind of half attachment to a cousin of mine. We used to quarrel, and make up, and quarrel again; but somehow, just as careless spendthrifts forget to destroy the old bill when they give a renewal, and at last find a swingeing sum hanging over them they never dreamed of, Sophy and I never entirely cancelled our old scores, but kept them back to be demanded at some future time. And the end has been, a regular rupture between us, and she is going to be married at the end of this month, and, not to be outdone on the score of indifference, I should like to announce my own happiness, since that's the word for it, first."

"But have you means to marry?"

"Not a shilling."

"Nor prospects?"

"None."

"Then I don't understand——"

"Of course you don't understand. Nor could I make you understand how fellows like myself play the game of life. But let me try by an illustration to enlighten you. When there's no wind on a boat, and her sails flap lazily against the mast, she can have no guidance, for there is no steerage-way on her. She may drift with a current, or rot in a calm, or wait to be crushed by some heavier craft surging against her. Any wind—a squall, a hurricane—would be better than that. Such is my case. Marriage without means is a hurricane; but I'd rather face a hurricane than be waterlogged between two winds."

"But the girl you marry——"

"The girl I marry—or rather the girl who marries *me*—will soon learn that she's on board a privateer, and that on the wide ocean called life there's plenty of booty to be had, for a little dash and a little danger to grasp it."

"And is it to a condition like this, you'd bring the girl you love, Calvert?"

"Not if I had five thousand a year. If I owned that, or even four, I'd be as decorous as yourself; and I'd send my sons to Rugby, and act as poor-law guardian, and give my twenty pounds to the county hospital, and be a model Englishman, to your heart's content. But I haven't five thousand a year, no, nor five hundred a year; and as for the poor-house and the hospital, I'm far more likely to claim the benefit than aid the funds. Don't you see, my wise-headed friend, that the whole is a question of money? Morality is just now one of the very dearest things going, and even the rich cannot always afford it. As for me, a poor sub in an Indian regiment, I no more affect it than I presume to keep a yacht, or stand for a county."

"But what right have you to reduce another to such straits as these? Why bring a young girl into such a conflict?"

"If ever you read Louis Blanc, my good fellow, you'd have seen that the right of all rights is that of 'associated labour.' But come, let us not grow too deep in the theme, or we shall have very serious faces to meet our friends with, and yonder, where you see the drooping ash-trees, is the villa. Brush yourself up, therefore, for the coming interview; think of your bits of Shelley and Tennyson, and who knows but you'll acquit yourself with honour to your introducer."

"Let my introducer not be too confident," said Loyd, smiling; "but here come the ladies."

As he spoke, two girls drew nigh the landing-place, one leaning on the arm of the other, and in her attitude showing how dependent she was for support.

"My bashful friend, ladies!" said Calvert, presenting Loyd. And with this they landed.

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BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XVIII. LILY IS SENT FOR TO THE DRAWING-ROOM.

YEARS sped on, and the baby became a child, the child a school-girl. Years sped on—outside in wars tumults and revolts, in famines and shipwrecks, in debates and dancing-parties, in pestilence and in new operas; inside, in the same dull round of little tasks, little duties, little quarrels, little pleasures, little pains. Rhododendron House did not trouble itself about Corporation Reform, or the new Poor Law Board. Unmoved it beheld Strasburg expeditions, Fieschi conspiracies, trials of Dorchester labourers. Fashions came in and came out, but there was no material alteration in the cut of pinafores at Stockwell. Corn-law questions convulsed the country, and Miss Bunnycastle grumbled at the baker's bill, but the five-and-thirty boarders had four thin parallelograms apiece, of bread thinly veneered with Dorset butter, for breakfast, and four for tea, whether wheat was up or down in the market. Currency controversies agitated parliaments, engendered monstrous blue-books, and made financiers' lives a burden to them; but every Saturday, at noon, Miss Adelaide Bunnycastle appeared in the schoolroom with a tray set out with the boarders' weekly pocket-money, piled in symmetrical little heaps, mainly composed of coppers. The hebdomadal average was fourpence. A young lady who had sixpence a week was held to have an intimate connexion with the plutocracy; a shilling a week, and she was set down wealthy. As for the parlour-boarders, who brought golden sovereigns to school with them after the holidays, and were continually having five shillings (with a cake) sent to them per carrier, they were considered as daughters of the house of Rothschild. Miss Dallwallah had once actually exhibited a five-pound note, payable on demand by the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. It was bran new, crisp, and gleaming. She showed it to her chosen companions as a mark of high favour towards them. Many were of opinion that it should be framed and glazed. Mrs. Bunnycastle, alarmed at the idea of a young lady not yet sixteen having so much money, remonstrated with Mr. Coopinghurst, the commercial gentleman in Austin Friars who was the agent in England of Miss Dallwallah's papa, and at whose country-house at Balham the Sultana Scheherazade passed her Midsummer and Christmas holidays. Mr. Coopinghurst curtly replied, that if Mrs. Bunnycastle was not satisfied with her pupil, he was ready to remove the young lady at the next vacation, and that, indeed, he had been thinking of seeking out a superior school for Miss Dallwallah, who, in all probability, would be the inheritress of great wealth. Mrs. Bunnycastle thenceforth grumbled no more; if the Begum had brought half a dozen lacs of rupees back with her in her play-box at the beginning of the next half-year, the schoolmistress would never have proffered a word of complaint.

Lily had grown up to be eight years old. It was agreed on all hands, that although her figure was graceful and well formed, she would never be tall. She had developed by easy stages, and had not "shot up" in the bean-stalk fashion. The Bunnycastles granted that her brown hair was very soft and wavy, that her hands and feet were very small, that her skin was exquisitely white, that her eyes were very large and blue, that her mouth was delicate and well formed, and garnished with teeth of irreproachable regularity and whiteness; but they authoritatively declared that she was not pretty, and would never become a beauty. She would be "pleasing," nothing more. The truth must out, and I don't think the Bunnycastles libelled her; Lily's nose was so decidedly retroussé as to be close upon the absolute snub. But it was a very charming little nose for all that—the coral and ivory nostrils almost transparent, the bridge slight and short, but coquettish, as a bridge over an artificial rivulet in a pleasure-garden. Then her forehead was decidedly a little too low. It has been my fortune to make acquaintance with a number of ladies and gentlemen of all ages, with foreheads as broad and lofty as pumpkins, and who were more or less idiots; therefore I am not disposed to abide by the dictum of Miss Barbara Bunnycastle, who deplored the shallowness of Lily's brow, and was certain that she would turn out a fool. Finally, the shape of her visage inclined more to the square than to the oval. Unrelieved by expression or animation, Lily's face would, from physiognomists—whose broad principles of doctrine one should respect,

but whose minute dogmatism on details is to be contemned—have received a sweeping verdict of censure. It is certain that Miss Furblow, the draper's daughter, who was not very refined in her conversation, once told Lily that she had a face like the portrait of Mr. Tom Spring, the prizefighter. But, all that was irregular and all that was animal in the little girl's countenance found compensation, a hundredfold, in the merry smile that lighted up her lineaments at the slightest encouragement; in the wistful, wishing, intelligent beam that played in her eyes; in her soft and pleading look when she was told a doleful tale. She had a temper of her own, a warm and somewhat peppery one, but it found no vent in black looks, bitten lips, flashing eyes, and clenched hands. When she was moved she turned very red, and spoke very quickly, and then all the pent-up feelings found relief in a flood of passionate tears. It was dangerous to meddle with her then, for she would shake you off with that delightful childish backward movement of the hand which can only be thoroughly conveyed to the mind of a non-spectator by registering the accompanying interjection: the French "Na," the English "I shan't." But when Lily had said "I shan't," and "Be quiet" (in crescendo), and "It's a shame," a few times, she calmed down, and the sun of her smiles came out in splendour. Her tempers were as easy to quell as they were difficult to rouse. She would bear a prodigious amount of teasing. Injuries, cross words, she would endure with a surprising meekness and equanimity; or she would strive to disarm her persecutor by caresses and endearing speech. But contempt irritated her. She was, when scorned, as pugnacious as a robin-redbreast. You might laugh at her, but it were better not to sneer at her. Perhaps this passionate resentment of contumely arose from Lily being somewhat vain.

She was now eight years old, and neither a dunce nor an intellectual prodigy. Her masters and mistresses had very few complaints to bring against her. Since that first memorable morning when she sat down on the drugget and said "I won't," she had always rendered an implicit and cheerful obedience to Mrs. Bunnycastle and her assistants. In the way of "doing as she was told," she was a pattern to the other young ladies. Now and then in the schoolroom she was reprimanded for talking at unseasonable times, for her tongue was as alert and vivacious as the "clever pony" in a butcher's cart, and required to be reined in occasionally. Now and then, Miss Barbara had had to scold her for carelessness, for treading her shoes down at heel, for inking her pinafore, or losing her pocket-handkerchief. Once or twice, one of the governesses—but this was when Lily was very young indeed—had been compelled to interfere when she was in her tempers, and had recommended a short sojourn in the corner as a means of cooling those tempers down. These were her gravest scholastic offences, unless, indeed, I take account of one or two desperate attempts she made when she got older, to shield her playfellows from reproof, and to take upon herself the blame they had incurred. I believe all candid and unprejudiced instructresses of feminine youth who read this, will agree with me that the two master vices with which they have to cope are the proneness of their young charges to pertness and sauciness in reply, and their painful addictedness to that form of deception which is known as "slyness." But Lily was never pert, and she could not be sly. With the exception of the attempts at shielding offenders mentioned above, which were usually so transparent as to be at once detected, she would not venture even upon a white lie.

Be it also, to the honour of the little woman, recorded, that she never grumbled. Now, in order to be a grumbler at school it does not at all follow that you must be ill treated. Discontent is as often the result of satiety as of privation. A lapdog oftener growls over his chicken and cream, than a mongrel does over his bare bone. At plentiful harvests farmers (who murmur at everything, and would have "wanted rain" in the garden of Eden) murmur most. I dare say that a workhouse child fed on gruel and "seconds" bread from year's end to year's end, is, in the long run, less given to repine at her lot than a young lady at boarding-school, with three abundant meals a day, and the certainty of enjoying meals as many, and as abundant, on the morrow. The Bunnycastles were economical, and made as much out of the housekeeping as they, with decency, conveniently could; but they neither starved the five-and-thirty, nor fed them on coarse and unwholesome food, pregnant with boils and blains and skin diseases. The butcher's cart called regularly, and the joints he brought were, if not prime, nourishing. But Lily lived, nevertheless, in an atmosphere of grumbling. The great girls had no dearer pastime than to gird at their instructresses, and accuse them of the most deliberate meanness in the article of dietary. The Miss Bunnycastles could never assume a new silk dress without its being darkly hinted in the schoolroom that it was "got out of us girls." The first plateful of meat at dinner-time was denounced as shamefully deficient as to quantity and quality; the second "help" was held up to scorn as a shameful and cruel imposture. The Wednesday mess of fish and boiled rice was cited as a standing attempt to rob the boarders of their due, and their parents of the money they paid. "Unlimited diet, indeed!" would cry Miss Furblow, tossing up her head. "Is that nasty suet-pudding they give us twice a week, unlimited diet?" Satirical poems were made against the meat-pie, which made its appearance every Monday morning. Occasionally the round of beef and mutton was relieved by a piece of veal, and then the malcontents declared that Clodshop (Clodshop was the butcher) had lost a calf by disease, and had sold it to the Bunnycastles, cheap. There was no end to their grumbling. Lily listened to it all, marvelling greatly, but forbearing to

join in the chorus of complaints. She ate her meals thankfully, and did not find her food either scanty or repulsive. Perhaps she was too young to be a judge of cookery. Perhaps, never having had a home, she was not in a position to draw invidious comparisons. And yet I scarcely think that the young ladies who were among the most inveterate grumblers had been, as a rule, nursed in the lap of luxury; many of them had been at other schools where they were worse treated, and worse fed. But it was the fashion to abuse the dietary; and those who spoke well of it were voted mean-spirited creatures. The insatiable appetite of female youth—for between ten and fourteen there are few things, out of the line of a cormorant, to equal a girl's voracity—may have had something to do with it; nor, on the other hand, are young ladies at school the only persons in the world who are given to quarrelling with their bread-and-butter.

If Lily had been anything of a tale-teller there would have been sad work between the authorities and the pupils, owing to these chronic criticisms on the cuisine. The child had full license to come and go between the schoolroom and the parlour; and might have been found a very convenient spy in the two naturally hostile camps. A Jesuit's mouth would have watered to instruct her in the arts of secret diplomacy; but she knew nothing of leasing-making; and somehow her open face and artless ways made those who might have trained her to be a hypocrite at school, ashamed of their design, and abortive in their intent.

She had now been three years and a half at Rhododendron House, and the sum agreed upon for her maintenance and education had been regularly paid in yearly sums, always in advance, by orders on a banker in Cornhill. The drafts came accompanied by short notes written in a foreign hand, but in very good English: in which a person signing himself J. B. Constant said that he had the honour to enclose the amount of Miss Floris's account, and that he would not trouble Mrs. Bunnycastle to make any communication to him, for the information of her papa as to the young lady's health and progress, since, from means at his command, he was well informed upon those matters himself. To the satisfaction of the Bunnycastles at receiving so liberal a stipend for the board and education of such a very little girl, was added a vague apprehension of losing her if they did not treat her with every kindness, and a dim consciousness that their proceedings were being watched over by some occult external influence. It was under these circumstances, and when Lily was fast verging upon her ninth year, that she was one morning dressed in her best and told that she was to be taken at once to the drawing-room, where a strange lady waited to see her.

CHAPTER XIX. LILY'S VISITORS.

Miss Floris sent for to the drawing-room! A strange lady for Lily! The whole school wondered at the news. There was a commotion. The very maid-servants were amazed. Such a thing had never occurred during the litle girl's three years and a half's residence at Rhododendron House. She had been set down, by general acceptation: not as a friendless child—for that implied pauperism, and the regular discharge of Lily's school-bills was sufficient evidence of her having friends somewhere—but as one whose connexions, whoever they were, resided far away, and were deterred, by major reasons, from coming to visit her.

Miss Dallwallah was, to some extent, in the same position: the requirements of the Indian Civil Service detaining her papa in his distant bungalow, and her mamma being dead; but no one would have dared to call Miss Dallwallah friendless. The Begum went home, regularly for the holidays, to the commercial gentleman at Balham; whereas Lily had never passed, save under scholastic escort, the outer gates of Rhododendron House. Those weary weeks passed in the deserted schoolroom and the scarcely less deserted house—for the Miss Bunnycastles were accustomed in holiday-time to repair to the pleasant shores of Ramsgate and Margate, in quest of health and husbands; and Mrs. Bunnycastle was not, at the best of times, very amusing company for a little girl not yet eight years of age—were full of sorrowful memories for Lily. Inquisitive as she was, and fond of the contemplation of external objects that she might build mental speculations upon them, one is apt to grow tired at last, of peering into inkstands in whose caked depths florid growths of white fungi have accumulated. The dusty débris of last half's slate pencils will at last lose their charm, and novelty cease to emerge from the names of bygone pupils cut on desks and forms. Lily remembered, with a shuddering dread, the lonely dinners and teas that used to be served to her in the schoolroom; the sepulchral ticking of clocks all over the premises; the boldness of a certain black rat that used to sally from beneath the meat-screen bookcase, and watch her as she fed, and wink at her with fierce red eyes, as though he said, "Drop me plenty of crumbs, or, by my grandmother's whiskers, I will scale the stool on which your tiny body is perched, and eat you up!" Lily was always glad when the holidays were over. And when Mrs. Bunnycastle's young friends came back, grumbling, as usual, at having to recommence their studies, and leave their beds when the "getting-up" bell rang, she wondered, in her simple soul, whatever they could have to be discontented with.

After she had been dressed, and brushed, and tidied, and made generally spruce and shining as a new pin, Miss Barbara took her by the hand, and led her to the best parlour.

There was a lady waiting for her. She was a very handsome lady, not in her first youth, but in her second, which, very probably, was handsomer than the first had been. She was very splendidly dressed: so splendidly, that Lily, suddenly collecting all that she had heard about the Arabian Nights, instantly put her

down as the absolute and visible impersonation of that Sultana Scheherazade, of whom Miss Dallwallah was the imaginary type. She had a great deal of silk about her that rustled, and of lace that fluttered, and of flowers that waved, and a great many ornaments of jewels and gold that jingled, and made a shine. It occurred to Lily that had she purchased the picture of that lady from the gallery of Mr. Marks, or Mr. Park, for a penny plain, she would cost at least twelve and sixpence to emblazon and finish off completely in tinsel.

The visitor did not appear, however, to be either a very patient, or a very good-tempered lady. She had been kept for some time waiting, and it had made her cross. She was drumming on the ground with her feet, and rapping Mrs. Bunnycastle's great circular walnut-wood drawing-room table with her parasol: a potent lady, indeed, so to presume to rap that revered article of furniture! Moreover, when Miss Barbara, with Lily meekly trotting after her, entered the apartment, she turned to the former with a very quick and fierce movement, and said:

"Had you not better keep me all day? Is this little brat a princess that I am to dance attendance for hours before she grants me an audience?"

Lily opened her eyes at being spoken of as a brat. No such ill-natured term had ever yet been applied to her. This was evidently a very cross lady: as cross as the tall English teacher, who was sent away for pulling the girls' ears when they were remiss in their geography—the Miss Bunnycastles observing, at the time, and with perfect propriety and candour, that if anything of that kind was to be done, they could do it themselves. Lily noticed, too, apart from the angry vehemence of the lady's manner, that her voice did not resemble that of the Bunnycastles, or of any English girl in the school. She spoke more like Mademoiselle, for shortness called "Mamselle," French governess at Rhododendron House, who was accustomed to rail against the Bunnycastles as "tyrannical Megæras," to have the toothache, and to weep about her ancestors.

Miss Barbara drew herself up somewhat, at being thus abruptly addressed. Alone, it would not have so much mattered; but, in the presence of a scholar, to be snubbed was intolerable. Did not Doctor Busby, when he went over Westminster School with King Charles the Second, apologise to his majesty for keeping his hat on, upon the ground that if his boys were led for an instant to imagine that there was in the whole world a greater personage than he, his authority would be lost for ever? So, Miss Barbara drew herself up, and looked sharp-edged rulers, or whatever the law of kindness was capable of resorting to in moments of resentment, at the aggressor.

"My mamma, madam," she explained, with the polite severity of offended dignity, "is confined to her bed by sickness, else she would have received you. My sisters are detained in the schoolroom by their scholastic duties. With my own hands I have prepared Miss Floris for the visit which, during three years and a half, her friends have never condescended to pay her instructresses."

"She ought not to want any preparation," returned the lady, with undiminished violence. "Do you keep her in a pigsty that she is not fit to be seen when her"—she stopped herself for an instant—"when her friends call upon her? Come here, child."

Lily answered the summons not very willingly. The handsome angry lady terrified her. She was accustomed, however, to do as she was bid, and obeyed the command: approaching the lady, however, sideways, and with one small forefinger in her mouth.

"Don't look like a fool," cried the handsome lady.

Lily did not know what else to look like; or, to an uninterested spectator, she might have looked very much like a little girl in active preparation for a good cry. Her perturbation was increased when the strange visitor, pulling the child towards her, and with no very gentle hand offered very unmistakable evidence that she was about to undress her. She stayed her hand, however, at the sight of Lily's little gleaming white shoulders, which—a most curious and inconsequential lady, this—she proceeded, incontinent, to cover with very fierce hot kisses. And then, that nothing might be wanting to the oddity of her demeanour, she pushed the child away again.

"There," she said, "I see you're clean enough. Do you give her a bath every morning?" she resumed, addressing Miss Barbara.

"Miss Floris," retorted that young lady, combining a diplomatic evasion with much moral suavity, "has constantly received unremitting attention, both as regards her physical and mental requirements."

"How fine you schoolmistresses talk!" the lady went on, not, apparently, in the slightest degree touched by the governess's eloquence. "It is all in the advertisement, I suppose—l'annonce. What is your name, child?"

The little girl opened her eyes; and Miss Barbara opened hers too. Had not the strange lady asked for Miss Floris?

"Lily," the child answered.

"Lily what?"

"Lily Floris, ma'am."

"Beast of a name. We must change it. How old are you?"

Lily looked appealingly at Miss Barbara.

"I have reason to believe," Miss Bunnycastle remarked, with lofty condescension, "that Miss Floris is rapidly approaching her eighth birthday."

"Are you happy here?" resumed the lady, not deigning to acknowledge Miss Bunnycastle's volunteered statement.

"Yes, ma'am," the child replied, with all the sincerity of eight years of age. The lady frowned at this somewhat; but Miss Bunnycastle rendered thanks to Lily, in her secret

soul. "It was always an engaging little thing," she admitted mentally.

"Do they beat you?" the lady continued.

"No, ma'am," the child returned, opening her eyes wider than ever.

"Tant pis," said the lady. "When I was young they used to beat me like a sack. It is true," she added, turning to Miss Barbara.

Miss Bunnycastle made a genteel inclination of the head, which might mean anything; but I believe that in the recesses of her mind the thought just then was uppermost, that if that handsome lady had been one of her young lady-boarders, and of a convenient age, she would have given her some vivâ voce exemplifications of the law of kindness, which should have been of a nature to astonish her.

"I suppose it's good for children, the stick, and all that," the lady added, musing. "It did me a torrent of good, to be sure. It made me love everybody so. There," she cried, giving her body a sudden wrench, as though she wished to rid herself of an unpleasant theme of thought, "I dare say you're too frightened to tell the truth while your schoolmistress is near. Please to have her dressed, and I will take her out for a walk."

The last part of her speech was addressed to Miss Barbara, and the governess thought it high time to make a stand upon it.

"Madam," she said, with freezing politeness, "Miss Floris was placed here, three years and a half since, by two gentlemen who, in confiding her—then almost an infant—to our charge, strictly stipulated that she was never to leave it, save under direct instructions from——"

"Monsieur Jean Baptiste Constant," the lady interposed, and, for a wonder, very coolly. "I know all about that. M. Constant is the agent for Miss Floris's guardian, and M. Constant pays her school-bills every year."

"Precisely so," Miss Barbara returned. "Therefore, without instructions from M. Constant——"

"You wouldn't let her go: at least you'd say you wouldn't, although, if I chose, I'd have the child out of this house, if fifty dragoons with drawn swords stood at the door to oppose it. But what nonsense all this is. Do you know the handwriting of M. Jean Baptiste Constant?"

"Perfectly well, madam."

"Then read that: get the child's hat and pelisse on, and let me hear no more about it."

She opened a pretty reticule, all velvet and golden beads, and flung rather than handed to Miss Bunnycastle a note written in M. Constant's remarkably small and neat handwriting, in which, with many compliments to the amiable Madame and Mesdemoiselles Bunnycastle, he requested them, in all respects, to obey such directions as should be given to them in respect to Miss Lily Floris, by Madame la Comtesse de Prannes, that young lady's nearest female relative.

"The letter, I see, is dated Paris," Miss Bunnycastle replied, after reading and re-reading the note, but still with a certain amount of hesitation.

"Whence else?" returned the lady, with impetuosity. "He being in Paris. M. Jean Baptiste Constant is ill. He is in bed. He has an aneurism."

"And you, madam?"

"You are very inquisitive. I am Miss Floris's nearest female relative. I am Madame la Comtesse de Prannes. There is my card, which I gave to your dirty slut of a servant. Would you like to know anything else? Where I was born? When I was baptised? At what age I made my first communion?"

The last straw broke the camel's back. The Bunnycastle had borne, though with much inward raging, with all the discourtesy of the strange lady, but that allusion to her neat-handed Phillis as a "dirty slut" was too much for her. She cast M. J. B. Constant's letter from her, and, with a heightening colour, exclaimed:

"I won't let the dear little child go. I don't know who you are, or what you mean. Your manners are most insulting, and unless the gentlemen come themselves to fetch Miss Floris, or M. Constant sends a messenger who knows how to behave herself, the darling shan't go. Do you want to go, Lily?"

The subject of this controversy, simply reasoning that the strange lady frightened her, and that she was very fond of Miss Bunnycastle, and, moreover, that it was decidedly preferable to be called a darling than a brat, replied, her little heart palpitating violently, that she was very happy where she was, and that she didn't want to go away with anybody.

"I thought so!" Miss Barbara exclaimed, triumphantly catching the child to her. "A pretty thing, indeed, to be tutored and domineered over in one's own house. You have your answer, madam, and I must wish you a good morning." And she made as though she would have rung the bell to have the importunate visitor ushered out.

But Miss Barbara Bunnycastle reckoned without her host. The strange lady rose in a rage.

"You devil!" she cried. Such language in a genteel establishment for young ladies! "I will have the child. Do your worst. I say she shall go with me. You madwoman, go and ask your mother and sisters, and they will make you listen to reason. Call in the police, if you like, and see what a charming figure your school will make in the journals. Go, idiot, and take advice."

She set her teeth together, and glared at Miss Barbara as though she would devour her. The schoolmistress was fairly appalled. Was the lady mad? Something must be done, and on reflection she concluded that the best thing she could do was to consult Celia and Adelaide. The front gate was fast locked, and the lady would hardly be so desperate, she thought, as to scale the iron railings. But how to leave her

in the drawing-room, and how to get her away from Lily?

The stranger seemed to divine her thoughts. "Ring the bell, if you like," she said, "and tell the other women to come here. I'm not afraid of twenty of them. But I'll tell you what! Before I leave this room without the child, I'll smash every window, and set fire to the house." And the lady decidedly looked as though she meant what she said.

It was a strange dilemma: an uprooting of all the conventionalities, an unheard-of revolution in the ordinarily placid world of Rhododendron House. A servant was rung for, and the Miss Bunnycastles summoned. Then, a special embassy was despatched to Mrs. Bunnycastle up-stairs; but the old lady, who was now growing very feeble, and was not quite valid, mentally, could suggest nothing, and confined herself to a general remark that "she never heard of such goings on." As a last resource, Mr. Drax was sent for. That discreet practitioner happened fortunately to be at home, and on his arrival at the school did his best to throw oil on the troubled waters. He advised concession. M. J. B. Constant's handwriting was undeniably genuine. M. J. B. Constant's wishes must be attended to. Moreover, there was nothing owing. Lily's bill was always paid in advance, and there were at least six months to run, to the next term of payment. The lady was evidently a lady. (To be sure, Mr. Drax had not seen her in a rage.) Clearly, the only course to adopt was to accede to her very rational demand.

It happened, at this conjuncture, that the strange lady's bearing underwent a remarkable change for the better. She condescended to smile on Mr. Drax. She told him that he had acted with great discretion: which expression tallied so exactly with the quality on which he so much prided himself, that Mr. Drax was in ecstasies, and even Celia and Adelaide thought that their sister had been a little too hasty. To be sure, they, too, had not seen the handsome lady in a rage. She, on her part, volunteered the information that she was Lily's aunt, that her only object in temporarily removing her was to take her out for a holiday and purchase her some new clothes; and she faithfully promised to return with the child, on that self-same evening. Finally, a treaty of peace was arranged. As a matter of form, a fresh embassy was despatched to Mrs. Bunnycastle, to obtain her consent, as chief of the establishment, to Miss Floris's temporary departure; but that good lady merely told her daughters that they might do as they liked, and expressed a desire not to be "worrited." Poor, placid Mrs. Bunnycastle: we shall see thee no more.

Lily, who had stood and wondered throughout the whole of this strange argument, was at length conducted to a bedroom and arrayed in her walking clothes. Miss Barbara it was who buttoned on her pelisse, and tied her hat beneath her dimpled chin; but Miss Barbara, although she had been forced to yield to superior numbers was by no means satisfied in mind, at the upshot of the dispute.

"You'll be sure to come back early this evening," she said, as kneeling on the floor to adjust a bow, she gazed earnestly in the child's face.

"Yes, Miss Babby" (this was the petit nom which, of all the five-and-thirty boarders, Lily, the chartered pet of the establishment, was privileged to address Miss Barbara by).

"Yes, Miss Babby," Lily whimpered, "and I'm sure I don't want to go away at all."

"There, you mustn't cry," Miss Barbara, who was on the point of shedding tears herself, hastily interposed; "it's naughty, and not like a great girl, you know. Mind you're back by evening prayers. If you don't, you'll be punished." This was said with a touch of Miss Barbara Bunnycastle's ordinary and scholastic sententiousness, but her heart was not in her words, and, casting her arms around the little girl's neck, and without any valid reason in the world that I know of, she wept over her as though her heart would break.

The same quite irrational impulse led Miss Barbara, after Lily had been carried off in a kind of sweeping and defiant triumph by the strange lady who had so remarkable a temper, to shed many more tears. It was foolish, she admitted, but she couldn't help it. The child would be back soon. There was no harm in her going out. Her sisters were quite satisfied. Mr. Drax had pledged his discretion to the authenticity of J. B. Constant's autograph. But Miss Barbara mistrusted, and Miss Barbara wept, she knew not why. Somehow, this little brown-haired blue-eyed maiden had twisted herself round her heart, and she felt as though the charming little parasite had been rudely torn away. She dried her eyes, and put on, as well as she could manage it, the scholastic countenance, and then she went down into the schoolroom and took a geography class. Her temper was tried in the usual manner. There was the usual average of stupid young ladies, careless young ladies, young ladies who were pert, and young ladies who were aggravating. She ground, for the five thousandth time, the dreary old barrel-organ to its accustomed round of tunes, but her spirit was far away. Her heart yearned for Lily. She distributed good marks and bad marks unconsciously, and she was inexpressibly grateful for tea-time: not alone because her wearisome task was over, but because the time had grown nearer when she thought the child would return.

That a schoolmistress is a "cross old thing," and nothing more, whole generations of young ladies have unanimously agreed. In regions far remote from the schoolroom and its petty verdicts, polite society finds little difficulty in setting down the governess as a prim, precise, fastidious personage, full of angular ways and ludicrous rigidity. She is somebody to be caricatured, or snubbed, or superciliously patronised. Ah! if we only thought a little more of what she had to go through. Ah! if we only reflected

a little on how sick grows the head that has to listen to the strains, how numbed grows the hand that has to turn, turn, turn, that everlasting barrel-organ! Men, with a smug complacency, repeat, one after the other, that women have a special aptitude for teaching; that they are patient, willing, persuasive, and the rest; and then, with pitiless politeness, condemn them to grind the barrel organ for the term of their natural lives. That men are not so eminently fitted for the task of tuition is shown by their losing patience half a dozen times in the course of a lesson, and falling on the cubs they are licking into shape and thrashing them fiercely; but gentle, long-suffering woman is contented to go on mildly nagging, and wrangling, and moralising over the cubs, when they decline to dance to the very genteelest of tunes. In the female wards of every lunatic asylum you are sure to meet with one or two demented schoolmistresses. I often wonder that for the one or two, I don't meet a dozen.

Tea-time came and went; then play-hour; then study-hour; at last, the times for reading prayers and going to bed. Miss Floris had not come back. Her continued absence was common talk in the schoolroom. Among the girls, one party, the more imaginative, speculated on the dreadful things that would be done to a pupil who stayed beyond her leave; another, and more practical section, opined that Lily would be held harmless, seeing what a favourite she was with the authorities.

Time went on, and the Miss Bunnycastles sat down to that supper which they were too sick at heart to eat. The clock was on the stroke of ten, when the outer gate bell rang.

"'Tis she! 'tis Miss Floris!" cried Barbara; "the dear little thing!"

"The naughty little minx, rather!" added Celia, with some asperity.

"Perhaps it isn't her fault," pleaded Adelaide; "she may have been taken ill. But here she is!"

The door opened, and the maid appeared, with a scared face, announcing not Lily, but a gentleman; and, close upon her heels, there followed, nearly breathless with haste, nearly wild with excitement, Jean Baptiste Constant.

"The child!" he cried; "the child, dear ladies! Has she come back?"

A trembling negative had to be returned to his question.

"Oh! I am ruined, I am ruined!" the Swiss went on. "Where is she? What have you done with her? Oh! my little, little Lily. She has been stolen, stolen by that monster of a woman. Malediction!"

And for a long time, this was all that could be got out of J. B. Constant. He persisted in declaring that he was ruined. By degrees, he calmed down a little, and explained that, at five o'clock that afternoon, he had seen the child pass, in a hackney-coach, with a person in whose company (so with much vehemence he declared) she had no right to be. It was in Regent-street. He had followed the coach as rapidly as he could, and, by voice and gestures, had endeavoured to arrest its progress. But all was in vain. The place was Regent-street; the time, the full tide of afternoon life. At length, in despair, he had been compelled to abandon the chase, vainly endeavouring to persuade himself that he might have been mistaken. He had made scores of inquiries—perquisitions, he called them—in places whither he thought it at least faintly probable that Lily might have been conveyed; and, at length, he had come to Rhododendron House.

The Bunnycastles could do little to console him. They made the most of their reluctance to allow Lily to leave; but what were they to do? They had long hesitated, but had at last acted on the advice of Mr. Drax, a trusted and discreet friend.

"Curse Mr. Drax!" cried the valet, fiercely. "Drax is a goose, a pig, a donkey!" And I am afraid the discomfited Miss Bunnycastles felt at that moment very much inclined to agree with J. B. C. Drax's renown for discretion was gone for ever.

They showed J. B. Constant the note purporting to be in his handwriting. He flung it from him with something very like an oath, and a yell of rage.

"A forgery, an infamous forgery!" he cried, distractedly. "Fool that I was, not to have foreseen the possibility of such a fraud. That woman would do anything!"

"And whatever will your master say?" naïvely remarked Miss Adelaide, who had been eyeing the valet with much curiosity.

"My master!" he repeated; "burn my master! This little angel was worth twenty thousand masters to me."

Grief made him garrulous, but his communicativeness was not of a nature to satisfy the Bunnycastles. As the payments had all been made in advance, and the customary references dispensed with, they felt the indelicacy of pressing him with direct questions. Very little that was definite could be extracted from J. B. Constant. He would mention no names; but, when the card of Madame la Comtesse de Prannes was shown to him, he tore it, contemptuously, in half, and muttered, "Bah! one of her twenty aliases."

The council remained in session until an hour was attained quite unexampled in the annals of this well-conducted establishment. But Lily did not come back. Indeed, to Rhododendron House she was not to return again. J. B. Constant, with lowering looks, but with many protestations of regret at having disturbed the ladies, took his leave, saying, that if the child did not come back, they were very welcome to keep what remained of her wardrobe as some slight compensation for the trouble they had taken. And then the Bunnycastles were left desolate. The compensation was very slight indeed. Barbara had to mourn the loss of her darling, and would not be comforted; and her two more practical sisters were bound in bitterness to acknowledge that the payments, having

been made in advance, they could not demand even so much as a quarter's notice for the sudden removal of their young lady-boarder.

OUR COUSINS' CONVERSATION.

There is, I think, a prevalent but erroneous impression in England that the Americans are a talkative people. Recent experience in the way of travel in the States has convinced me that this is not the case. Among the upper million of refined and well-educated ladies and gentlemen there are numbers of good conversationalists who do not hide their light under a bushel; and even those who are not so richly endowed with the "gift of the gab" talk as much as all who mix in good society in England do—some from a sincere love of an interchange of ideas, and a traffic in gossip; others from motives of courtesy and politeness. An American lady, for instance, however beautiful, does not rely solely on the silent eloquence of her personal charms; but will chat to you about the war, politics, slavery, the last sensation novel, the last style of head-dress in Paris, her baby's teething, or her husband's aversion to theatres. Young girls at home from school during the holidays, who would be blushing "bread-and-butter misses" in the old country, will ask you an infinite variety of questions with the utmost sang froid, and none of them of an inquisitive or prying character. I was six months among Our Cousins of all ranks and degrees, and was only once asked whether I was married or single. I hope I was not so uninteresting as to fail in inspiring curiosity, or so egotistical and communicative as to have dispensed with all need for cross-examination. But, unless I volunteered an account of my pedigree and social position, I don't think that my most intimate acquaintances knew whether I was descended from kings and princes, or the scion of a long line of shoe-blacks; and as to my profession or calling, they did not care to discover whether I was a bagman or a barrister-at-law. The upper million have become far less inquisitive, and the lower millions less talkative, than when I first visited Yankeedom more than twenty-five years ago.

The general run of ordinary folk with seedy-dark clothes, square-toed boots, and strangely-shaped hats, are so silent—so persistently and pertinaciously silent—that a stranger naturally thinks that this taciturnity must arise from melancholy or moroseness. But this is not the case. The majority can afford to be taciturn because he is occupied with the inevitable "quid;" he can "chaw" and think simultaneously; and expectoration is a pastime which does not hinder cogitation the most profound. A good many are thinking of the last bargain they have made, or the next they are likely to make. They are meditating on the "Almighty dollar," just as we go through elaborate processes of ratiocination here about the omnipotent sovereign and the not useless shilling; but they don't talk about it so much, if they think more. They are such keen folk, and have to deal with fellow-citizens so keen, that a trader must not waste his acuteness in conversation, but reserve it for action. The climate, also, may have something to do with this phenomenon, I can bear witness that in summer it was sometimes too hot to talk, and in winter it may be occasionally too cold. Then again they read incessantly—books and magazines to a fair extent, but newspapers for ever. A journal, and a cake of honeydew for "chawing" purposes, are meat and drink to a travelling American, Northerner or Southerner, in the absence of the two usual supports of human life. In the railway cars I have travelled miles and miles without hearing the exchange of two words. The well known Latin grammar quotation, Vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur, should be inscribed on the panels of the cars, and on the walls of the newsrooms of the hotels, not as a caution, but as a truism well known and regularly practised. In churches and libraries I have now and then overheard a little talking; but that merely, in all probability, arose from the wayward tendencies of the "child of freedom" to assert his independence by the violation of established custom.

I loafed about the Parker House, Boston, the whole of the incessantly wet day last spring, when the damp wires were reluctantly transmitting the unwelcome news of the disastrous defeat at Chancellorsville. I was vigilantly watching the manners and customs of the natives; prying ruthlessly into their wounded pride, chagrin, and disappointment. Grief makes some folk talkative and others taciturn. The men of Massachusetts fell into the latter phase of suffering. I lounged in chairs and sofas, gazed out on the deluge in the streets, walked now into the news-room where smoking was allowed, now into that where it was prohibited—all was silence in both. The dumb misery was very oppressive; and nothing varied its wearisome monotony but the frequently recurring opportunities of purchasing the "latest extras," or last editions of the daily papers. The little Irish boys drove a tremendous trade that soaking dismal day in Boston. They were, I think, the only personages in the hotel who exercised their faculties of speech that morning, and it was quite comforting in the midst of the flood of rain and disagreeable intelligence to hear that brogue which neither time nor travel can entirely take away. Nor did the bad weather and the bad news tend to fill "the bar." Our Cousins very wisely "liquor up" in prosperity, and in adversity shun the tap: a proof of their sagacity; for a man may sometimes drink with impunity if he is sailing with the wind, whereas, if he drinks when it is ahead, he will be obliged to "tack" in more senses than one. There was one remarkable exception. I met one old gentleman on the staircase who had evidently solaced his sorrows with a copious supply of stimulants. He was by very slow advances descending the stairs, and clung to

the banister with a cautious tenacity quite exemplary. It was really a very bad case of the *potation* disease.

The politicians in Transatlantica are the greatest talkers or speakers; for even in conversation they deliver set speeches, which woe betide you if you interrupt. The day after I landed in the great republic, a Maine-iac (or inhabitant of the State of Maine) was "posting" me "up" in contemporaneous politics, and charitably attempting to enlighten the more than heathen darkness of my English ignorance, when I ventured, at a favourable opportunity, to ask a question or raise an objection, I forget which. "I shall feel obliged, sir," said my Gamaliel, "if you will not interrupt me; but allow me to *get through* with what I have to say; and when I am *through*, I shall be happy to hear what you have to say, sir. Yēs, sir." I acquiesced with a nervous nod of the head, and he proceeded with his long oration, at the conclusion of which *I* made a short oration, and then he rejoined with another long one, and upon this system was the remainder of our dialogue conducted. He was a chemist and druggist, a strong democrat (not in the general, but in the special part sense of the word), and was bitterly severe upon the sentimentality of abolitionists. Among other things, he said, "I guess that if *your* George Thompson should come out here agin interfering about those cussed good-for-nothing niggers, he will be egged and stoned and ridden on a rail. He is no better than an infernal 'town charge;' he is." What a "town charge" means, I, by some mischance, never discovered on good authority. It was evidently meant as a term of obloquy, and is probably a pauper, dependent on the *town* for his support. It happens strangely that the English ex-M.P. and lecturer, who was thus indirectly menaced, is at the present moment addressing immense audiences at Boston, and in the capital itself.

Another peculiarity of those among Our Cousins who are loquacious is their laboured attempt to be excessively accurate and nice in their distinctions. A friend in New England used to amuse me beyond measure by his exquisitely careful essays at description. "Lucas S. Simpkins, sir, is, perhaps, take him for all in all, *one* of the *seven very acutest* intellects in all New Hampshire. I will admit that Senator Snooks has a higher analytical faculty, and the Honourable Peter Slocum is gifted with a nobler imagination and finer fancy; but my friend Simpkins, for absolute mental acuteness, has only six rivals in the whole state, and perhaps few in the whole continent."

The lavish use of the parenthesis is a frequent fault in writers and speakers of all nations and all ages. It is fortunately, however, vanishing from all good style everywhere; but I never heard it used with such common recurrence as in the conversation of two or three Northerners of my acquaintance—men of good talent and good culture. One of them was so determined a dealer in it, that I nicknamed him "Parenthesis" Palmer.

The use of set speeches is not confined to the politician alone. A literary lawyer I knew was in the habit of delivering a short harangue in conversation about an English author's recent publication. If I heard it once, I heard it twenty times. I could "trot him out" whenever I liked, and for the amusement of others frequently did. He never varied a word, a *syllable*, an *emphasis*, or an *accent*. Even the nasal twang was always the same. I should be very sorry to wound the feelings of that estimable old gentleman by mentioning in print the real name of the English writer, or the phraseology of his vivâ voce critique; but the following, without occasioning any offence, will give the reader a sufficient idea of my friend's style. If I made some remark about Mr. Kinglake's History of the Crimean Invasion, off would go the orator of private life: "When I read the first volume of Kinglake, I said, 'Kinglake had evidently *concluded* to crucify Louis Napoleon, and, by thunder, he *has* crucified him; but is it not extraordinary that while this acute and brilliant writer has *teetotally dried up* that *cuss* of a despot, he has not written one line about this land of freedom or our immortal George Washington?'"

As conversation obviously and not unreasonably consists of words, I think that I shall not be irrelevant in making a few observations on the peculiar phrases, idioms, and vocabulary in constant use on the other side of the water, but some of them almost unknown here, and calculated to instantly excite the attention and surprise of an English traveller. Some of these words and phrases are good old classical English, to be found in Shakespeare, and in the translation of the Bible, and words which the old colonists took with them from their old home, and which, though fallen into desuetude here, have been retained in daily use by our more conservative Cousins. Among them is the word "*sick*," which we apply now solely to nausea, while in America it is used as an exact equivalent for our word "ill," which I never heard used with them. It is almost superfluous to point out that it is old English. "Sick unto death" is a phrase used in the translation of the New Testament, where we are also told that "Peter's wife's mother lay *sick* of a fever."

The Americans do not use the word "stranger" to anything like the extent we imagine from hearing it incontinently repeated by every English actor impersonating a Yankee on the stage. "My friend" is a more frequent form of address. You ask your way in the streets, and the reply will often be, "My friend, if you go up Sixth Avenue, and turn down Seventeenth-street, I guess you will find B-street right opposite."

The two words repeated most frequently, and to which the foreign ear gets at last almost accustomed, are "air" for are, and "benn" for been. "We have benn talking to-day about your letters, my friend, to the London Daily ——, and we opine that you air not as friendly to this country as you might be, were you not prejudiced by your European ideas." When

Mr. Russell stated this, there was a great outcry, and at Boston it was mentioned to me as a glaring instance of Bull-Run Russell's inaccuracy and malevolence.

There are some few peculiarities, which are so well known here that I pass over them rapidly. Almost every one has some title, prefix, or handle to his name; and as they expect it themselves, so they lavishly confer it on others. I was introduced to a major-general at Frederick City, who turned out to be a very intelligent gentleman, who had travelled in Europe, and was celebrated as a scientific farmer, and somewhat scientific toper, in his own neighbourhood, but was a general in the State Militia. Every man is either "the Honourable," or a General or Colonel. I was usually addressed as Colonel (or "Cunnel") when with the army, as "Doctor" when with some of the staff of the Sanitary Commission. My acquaintances also insisted on imputing to me senatorial honours, to which I had no right whatever. I was several times introduced as "a Member of the British Parliament," though I as often accepted "the Chiltern Hundreds," and modestly denied the soft impeachment. I have letters in the desk at which I write, in which I am always introduced as "the Honourable P. Q. Z."

There must be some acknowledged points of difference between our tongue and theirs, for the Emperor Nicholas, during the Crimean war, issued a proclamation or edict of some kind, expressing his high and supreme desire and command that "the *American* language should be studied throughout his wide dominions." These are to be found in conversation, or in colloquial and humorous writings, like those of Haliburton, James Russell Lowell, and Artemus Ward. But Our Cousins have no need to be "thin-skinned" about their written style, when they can point proudly to the purity of Washington Irving, the sustained elevation and dignity of Prescott, and even the florid eloquence of Bancroft, to say nothing of ex-Professor and Poet Longfellow's charming Hyperion, or those of Ralph Waldo Emerson, or Oliver Wendell Holmes.

I am writing rather of vulgarities and peculiarities to be found mainly among the lower middle classes and the lower orders in America; and do not let us forget that we have our vulgarities and peculiarities, and that Our Cousins are just as severe upon us as we are upon Our Cousins. They may assuredly, with perfect truth, boast of the fact that the English (or, for the sake of concession, let us call it the American) language is far more purely spoken on "the boundless continent" than in its native home. There is nothing among the wildest prairie inhabitants of the West to answer to such odious and unintelligible dialects as are spoken by the agricultural labourers of Yorkshire, Somersetshire, and Wiltshire. The roughest private soldier in the army, the noisiest rowdie in New York, the humblest ostler, or porter, or stage-driver, long-shore man, or dustman, or scavenger, speaks the language used *here* by tolerably educated tradespeople. The Irish keep their brogue almost in full vigour; but an educated Irishman usually speaks exemplary English; and even Irishmen are educated in America.

The "vulgarities" are, perhaps, confined to the lower orders; but the higher and better educated have their "peculiarities." A lawyer in New England, who was a man of varied and extensive reading, remonstrated with me for breakfasting in the room only frequented by my own sex. I had done so for the very simple reason that I thought my appearance in the ladies' coffee-room would be an intrusion, as I had no ladies with me. It was not the result of misgiving. "Why don't you take your meals in the ladies' apartment," he said, "instead of in the midst of a parcel of hawking and spitting cusses?"

I heard another gentleman of the same culture and social status use the word "a human" as an equivalent for "a man." Speaking of some stranger to whom he had been introduced, he said, "I never saw such a queer *human* in all my life." I was surprised to find how many phrases that were familiar to my ear in the West Indies a quarter of a century ago, were in constant use both in New England and in the Border States. For example, the Barbadians and the Americans invariably use the word "*mad*" for angry. "Don't make me *mad*." "I was so *mad* this morning, because papa won't take us to the theatre to-night." Then, again, in both places, "mash" is equivalent to our "smash." I heard a small boy at Washington, beneath my window, telling a little girl, "I'll hit Tom with a *rock-stone*, I will. I'll hit him till he's a fool. I guess I'll *mash* his nose, so that it won't want mashing again."

To *conclude* is to determine. I remember a despatch from Rear-Admiral D. D. Porter, who was successful at Grand Gulf, April 29th, 1863, to the Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, in which he wrote that he had "*concluded* to land the troops." An impious old banker in the North, who was called upon by some devout emissaries of a missionary society and asked to contribute, is reported to have replied that his view of the case was that, as things stood, not half the people who deserved met their merited fate hereafter, and that, as far as he was personally concerned, he "had *concluded* to go to ——" the rest here understood. To "*skedaddle*" is now a fashionable word, signifying to "run away." When it was first used, a noble lord wrote to the Times to say that it was an old word in Scotland meaning "to spill," as applied especially to milk. Some pedantic correspondent forthwith suggested that "skedaddle" was derived from the Greek verb σκεδαννυμι, "to scatter." To be "gobbled up" is a still more recent phrase, and first rose on the vocabular horizon when I was in America. It means, "to be captured or seized" in war. "Some of our ammunition waggons and our teamsters were 'gobbled up' by the rebel cavalry."

Of course everything is "*fixed*" instead of being arranged, or settled. "Weddin-fixings" mean sumptuous food, high living; to use a very vulgar English phrase, "good grub." "*Homely*" means ugly, and *ugly* means vicious. To "*recuperate*" is to recover. A medical man at Philadelphia said to me, "I suffer a great deal from fatigue, but I *recuperate* rapidly during sleep." You "*locate*," not place, anything, and a place is usually a "*location*." You are *bound* to do anything; Anglicè, you ought to do it. In the words of the very classical and elegant song, "We're *bound* to go the whole hog or none." What we call here a leading article is in New York an "*editorial*;" and the staff of contributors to a journal are spoken of as its editors. To enjoy yourself is to "*have a good time*." This phrase, which I peculiarly dislike, from a kind of silly quaintness there is in it, was in every one's mouth. "*To be raised*," is to be brought up, or reared. "*To judge*," is to think or to imagine. "I should *judge*, Mr. P. Q. Z., that you are in very excellent health." In some of the newspapers the rule of writing appears to be never to use a short word when you can find a long one. Thus you must not say to give, but to "*donate*." "*Right away*" is *quickly* in the English language. The first night I slept at the Parker House, Boston, I rang my bell in the morning, and quietly asked the boy who answered it if I could have a warm bath? "Want a warm bath *rigged?*" said the juvenile, in a brusque manner. "I should like a bath," I replied, and after a considerable delay it was ready. The next morning I rang my bell very loudly, and, upon the youth arriving, shouted at him, "Rig me a bath *right away*." The boy seemed quite delighted by my promptitude and the accuracy of my conversational style, and my bath was "rigged" in two or three minutes. There was one odiously affected and absurd phrase creeping into the newspapers at the time I was leaving. The writers of paragraphs about the weather took to calling the hot days of July and August "the heated term."

Our Cousins have some, but not many, peculiarities of pronunciation. It is "obliggatory" on you to recŏgnise somebody. I heard the chief justice of the court for the District of Columbia at Washington talk of an ĭnqŭiry. It is very usual to shorten the penult of words of three syllables. They always talk of "the *compŏnent* parts" of a thing. Even the fashionable folk pronounce the word lévee, lĕvēē.

There is one element in Transatlantic talk which I mention with reticence, both because of the nature of the subject itself, and from an earnest wish not to give offence to a great people, whom I sincerely admire. I allude to a special and pre-eminent gift of swearing oaths of a most blasphemous character inherent in the lower orders of America. To hear swearing brought to its highest perfection, I believe one should visit Texas, where the inhabitants pride themselves upon the elaborate ingenuity and exquisite fancy of their long-winded imprecations.

The most daring flight in the way of swearing I have ever heard, was an observation made on board one of the Mississippi steam-boats. A Western farmer, though excessively drunk and noisy, had been playing poker, euchre, whist, and other games, with such transcendent success that he had literally "cleaned out" all his friends and acquaintances on board of their last "greenback" or "yellow-belly." When every one had, for obvious reasons, refused to continue playing, he threw the cards down with a thump on the table, and jumping up, exclaimed, "So, I guess, I've cleaned you all out, eh? And so I would clean out any soul on this airth this night. I am in such a humour this night, *I am*, that I would undertake to play the Almighty for the stars, and to leave him in total darkness in fifteen minutes."

SPRING RAIN.

THE Eastern wind came sweeping through
Spring's first triumphal arch of blue,
Trod hard her soft'ning lands,
Shook from her grasp into the storm
Lamb, bird, and flow'r, that just kept warm
While breathed on 'twixt her hands.

Shone on closed doors and sear-white street,
And shivering beggar's purpled feet,
The sunlight's brassy gleam;
Shone mockingly on pastures bare,
Where patient cows, with roughened hair,
Bent to the shrinking stream.

O'er the gaunt trees with leaf-buds burned,
The iron winter seemed returned
With thicker spots of rust;
A stony blue was overhead,
And Nature seemed not only dead,
But dried and turned to dust.

Till yesterday, at morning tide,
Came bulging landward clouds that dyed
The sky one leaden stain;
We had scarce marked the softened cold,
When lo! the dust, so pale, so old,
Had dimpled to the rain.

Bright rain not rocked on Winter's gale,
Nor wreathed in stealthy Autumn's veil,
But Spring-time's fairy daughter,
Who, when she speaks, drops diamonds round,
That twinkle on the streamy ground
In pools of dancing water.

A sweet confusion everywhere,
A voiceful gladness on the air,
Poured out in ample measure;
The very stones seem clapping hands,
And ev'ry lifted face expands
As though 'twere raining pleasure.

Fall with crisp patter on the trees
Spring's clear out-spoken promises;
E'en now their perished leanness
Swells 'neath her dainty finger-tips.
How bashfully her fresh young lips
Will kiss them into greenness!

The dripping garden we look down,
Warm touches on its grey and brown
Her pleasant hand makes plain:
Here peeps a crocus, there the streak
On that closed tulip's wetted cheek
Seems reddening in the rain.

And who can so much beauty drop,
Through Nature's grand kaleidoscope,
As this beloved new comer?
Grouping anew old shapes and hues
In delicate transparent views,
Through which we see the Summer.

One crimped currant-leaf we see,
In its full cup, an augury
Of scarlet fruit discloses.
Those magic raindrops mirror shade,
Till wall and paling are o'erlaid
With visionary roses.

What odours from Earth's freshened breast!
What push of growth! What quickened zest!
And brooding from above!
A solemn, deep, delicious sense
Of a creative influence—
An Energy of Love.

Town trees in silver tangles shine,
And roofs have all a beaded line
Of crystal at their edges.
Gutter and spout, with gurgling call,
Answer the tinkling musical,
Of drops from window-ledges.

The rain's last sprinkled benison
A glory from the west hath won:
A lovely rainbow lying
Upon yon purple cloud the while,
That moves us like the tearful smile
Of some dear friend when dying.

Hark! up, and up, and up the sky,
With warble of rich melody,
Skylarks with joy ascend.
Ah, thus a thrill of faith can dart
A wingëd rapture:—lift the heart
Up after that, dear friend!

HOW MONSIEUR FLAMMAND DRAGGED HIS CHAIN.

I WAS in bad health, and very hard up. A sharp attack of jungle-fever had obliged me to leave India, where my regiment was quartered; and wandering about the different watering-places of France and Germany, trying to shake off the effects of my illness, had considerably reduced my purse. There were still some ten months (out of my two years' leave of absence on sick certificate) to run before I should be obliged to rejoin my corps in the East; but the bad effects of an English climate on my health, forced me to spend that time somewhere abroad. "Try a dry climate," said my London doctor; but his advice was something like that of the physician who recommended jelly and port wine to the sick pauper. The few hundred pounds of my patrimony which remained to me after the purchase of my several commissions, were long ago expended, and beyond my pay—three months of which had been advanced by that most kind-hearted and obliging of firms, Messrs. Cox and Co., the army agents—I had nothing whatever to depend upon. Under these circumstances, the question was not so much where to go, as where I could, without injury to my health, spend least money for the next five or six months; and thus reflecting; I was led to remember that a lady cousin of my own, who some ten years previously had married a French gentleman resident somewhere near Bourges, had often asked me to pay her and her adopted home a visit. I therefore wrote to this relative, and telling her and her husband exactly how I was situated, asked them point blank whether they could receive an invalid pauper for two or three months, and if not, whether I could find any cheap lodging in their neighbourhood. In due time the answer came, begging that I would make their home my home until my health was restored, and urging upon me the consideration that the district in which they resided was considered an exceedingly dry climate, the very thing, as I had told them, that my doctor recommended for me.

In three days after the receipt of my cousin's letter, I was at the London-bridge station, thence to make my way viâ Folkestone, Boulogne, Paris, Orléans, Blois, and Châteauroux, to Le Blanc, a small chef d'arrondissement town in the department of Indre, and the old province of Le Berrie, in the days when departments were not in France. At Le Blanc my cousin's husband met me, and drove me over to his château—which, by the way, in size and general appearance, resembled greatly one of the many "detached villa residences" common in the neighbourhoods of Chalk Farm, Highgate, and Stoke Newington—a distance of about three leagues, or nine miles, over the very worst road it has ever been my lot to travel on wheels. Arrived at the château, nothing could exceed the kindness with which I was received, and although the view from the windows—extending as it did over a vast plain quite as monotonous and uninteresting as the desert between Cairo and Suez—was not cheering to a sick man in bad spirits, I began very soon to feel that my sojourn in these parts would greatly benefit my health.

But country life in France is very different from country life in England. In the former country—unless amongst the few very rich nobles who merely go to their châteaux for a few months every year, or else amongst the financial millionnaires who have in their country-houses, as at Paris, every possible luxury, and only look to their brief stay there as a distraction during the intervals of money-making—country life has very few, if any, of the elegancies of life which with us are to be found more or less in the household of every country gentleman, no matter how modest his means. My cousin's husband was by no means badly off; in fact, for a French gentleman living on his own estate, he passed for being almost rich. And yet, day by day, he toiled—to say that he merely worked would not convey half

my meaning—at improving, or at seeing to the current necessary labour of his estate, much as Australian settlers are obliged to look after their newly-acquired sheep-farms. By daylight every morning he had taken his cup of café au lait, and was off, either on foot or on horseback, according to the distance, to see how some planting, or draining, or ploughing, or reaping, or felling of trees, was going on. At eleven o'clock he came back, and we then met for the first time in the day, at a déjeûner à la fourchette, which lasted until noon. No sooner was this meal over than he was off again to superintend some other work, while the lady of the house—who was always invisible until eleven o'clock—disappeared again to her household duties, and was no more seen until six, at which time we all sat down to dinner. In the evening, the master of the house was invariably knocked-up and sleepy, and his wife was fully occupied with hearing their two children say their prayers, and seeing them to bed. By nine o'clock everybody in the house had retired for the night. This was the life we led six days out of seven. On Sunday the whole family went early to hear mass at the church of the neighbouring village. It was a league off, and they only got back a little before noon, when the substantial breakfast was served. The afternoon was spent in smoking, inspecting the poultry-yard, and receiving the visits of the parish priest, or a few of the peasant farmers who lived in the vicinity. There were no books, music, visitors to my hosts of their own rank in life; there was no returning of visits, no hunting, very little shooting, and, in short, no amusement of any kind.

Such as the very little shooting was, it formed for a time my solitary resource. After shooting in Indian jheels, where a bag of fifteen or sixteen couple of snipe is by no means an unusual amount of sport before mid-day, it was poor work to toil from early morning to late in the afternoon, and be rewarded with, perhaps, two dozen shots, of which more than half were at birds so wild that it was a mere waste of powder and lead firing at them. Then, again, French pointers are not trained as ours are to drop after a shot, but are taught to run in upon dead or wounded game, to pick it up, or catch it, and bring it to the sportsman. This custom an Englishman can hardly ever get over, and it worries him, no matter how long he may shoot in France. To bring back to the château half a dozen—three brace—red-legged partridges was considered a very excellent day's sport for my single gun, and to do even this I had to start very early in the morning, remain out all day, and only get home towards evening. When my bag contained a hare—le beau lièvre, as the French always call that quadruped—there was as much excitement among the servants and farm-labourers, as I ever saw in an Indian village when a Bengal tiger had fallen at a shot from an English sahib's rifle. The French look less to sport, but more to the shooting for the pot, than we do. I remember on one occasion bringing home, as the fruit of twelve hours' toiling under a blazing September sun, four brace of partridges, three snipe, and two hares. This wonderful day's sport was talked about through all the district for upwards of a month.

I very soon began to tire of this kind of shooting. I found the severe toil of walking over such a great extent of country—which was absolutely necessary in order to make any bag at all—too trying for my state of health, and therefore took to merely wandering about gun in hand, shooting if I fell in with any game, but not ashamed to return home with an empty bag. I became a subscriber for six months to that best of all papers—some one has called it the best friend of Englishmen on the Continent—Galignani's Messenger, and the walking over to the district post-office—two leagues off—three times a week, in order to receive each time two numbers of the paper, became almost occupation enough for me. In the country districts of France there is no such thing as delivery by the postman, each person living more than about a mile—I forget how many kilomètres is the stipulated distance—from the post-office in the provinces, must go or send for his own letters or papers, or do without them.

On one of these walking expeditions to fetch my newspaper I first became acquainted with Monsieur Flammand, or Père Flammand, as he was generally called. I was caught in a severe thunder-storm close to the outskirts of the village, and I ran to the nearest habitation and asked for shelter until the storm should pass. The house was a small two or three roomed cottage, of the sort inhabited in that part of France by the small peasant proprietors. It stood quite by itself, in a small plot of ground, perhaps three hundred yards from the rest of the village. The only occupants of the cottage appeared to be an old peasant woman and a very much older man, who was dressed in the long cassock worn on all occasions by the French Catholic clergy when not officiating in church. The old gentleman received me very kindly, and begged I would remain until the storm had quite passed, but as the rain lasted more than an hour, I remained talking with him long enough to discover that he was a man of much greater refinement and knowledge than was generally found among the rural clergy of France. That he was a priest I understood from the theological and devotional books in his room, but having already made the acquaintance of the parish priest at my cousin's house, and not having heard of there being another clergyman in the neighbourhood, I was puzzled to know who my entertainer could be, knowing that in France priests without parishes are very rare indeed, there being often not enough in the various dioceses to allow of an incumbent to each parish. Although an old man, my host was evidently not too infirm to officiate in a church, and therefore I dismissed the idea that he had been shelved on account of his age. When I returned

home in the evening, I asked my cousin and her husband concerning my new acquaintance, but beyond knowing the old man by sight, having heard that he had once been a priest, that he had lived nearly twenty years in the same cottage, that he always attended the daily and weekly services of the parish church, and partook every Sunday of the communion, but never officiated in any way—beyond these, and the circumstance that he was not a native of the parish, my friends knew nothing whatever about him. Now, in the Roman Catholic Church, to be once a priest, is to be always a priest. No individual who has been ordained, can take to any other pursuit. If he sin grievously against morality, or against ecclesiastical authority, or be convicted of heresy, he may be suspended from his functions for a longer or a shorter period by his bishop, but he nevertheless remains always a priest. I therefore wondered more and more what could be the reason of this old man not officiating in his calling: the more so as I learnt that, owing to the parish priest having to go once a month to another village where there was no incumbent, the church of the place where this old gentleman lived remained shut up every fourth Sunday.

Of his former life the old gentleman never spoke, save that he once said in my presence—for I got by degrees to know him very well indeed, and often called to sit and talk with him on my way to and from the post-office—that he had been ordained a priest in such a year (some forty years previously) at Paris. In short, it was only after I had been acquainted with him for three or four months, and when I had formed a decided liking for the old man, and when I was on the eve of leaving that part of France altogether, that I learnt from another person the history of Père Flammand.

Monsieur Flammand, when a young man about five-and-twenty, was ordained priest at Paris a few months after Napoleon was banished to St. Helena: that is to say, about the year 1816. After his ordination he was appointed vicaire—what in England we should call curate—to one of the large churches in the capital; and four or five years later he was chosen by the archbishop of the diocese to be curé—what with us would be called rector—of a small country parish about ten leagues from Paris. In this village—the name of which I forget—he inhabited a small house close to the church, containing five rooms besides the kitchen. One of these rooms was the priest's study; in another he took his meals; in the third he slept; the fourth was the room of the old bonne, or housekeeper, who was his only servant; the fifth, fitted up with a bed and a few chairs, formed a spare room in which any brother clergyman coming from a distance, or any stranger who happened to visit the curé, could sleep. All the rooms were on the ground floor: in fact, the house was merely a better kind of cottage. The room used as a spare room had been added to the rest of the house, and butted out close to the main road which led to the village. It had one door which opened into the garden, and another which led into the study, or sitting-room, next to which was the room in which the priest slept; the dining-room, the room in which the old bonne slept, and the kitchen, being all at the other side of the passage, which, as it were, cut the house in two.

One very cold winter's evening, shortly after dark, and in the midst of a snow-storm, a young peasant woman came to the priest's door, and besought the housekeeper for a lodging for the night. She said she was on her way to Paris to see her father, who was in service in that city, but she had wandered and lost her way in the snow-storm. She was not without means to pay for her lodging, but hoped Monsieur le Curé might kindly allow her to sleep in his kitchen for the night. It would not only save the price of her bed, but be more respectable as a sojourn for a young unmarried woman than the auberge of the village. In country places in France, such applications to the clergy are by no means uncommon, and were still less so before railways had drawn all towns and localities much nearer each other. Moreover, at that time there were a considerable number of disbanded soldiers, and other loose characters, wandering about France: insomuch that no woman who could have avoided doing it, would have spent a night in a small village wine-shop, if she had any other place she could go to.

As a matter of course the priest gave his consent that the traveller should stop the night in his house, and the spare room was got ready for her. The next morning the snow-storm was still so heavy that it was impossible for the woman to proceed on her journey, so she remained at the priest's, helping the old bonne in her household work, and dining with the priest and his housekeeper; in the evening she retired as before to the room which had been allotted to her.

The following morning, very early, there was an alarm through the village. A strange woman had been found murdered in the priest's house. It appeared that a labourer who often attended to the priest's garden, and did other odd jobs about the place, went to the curé's before any one was awake, with the intention of shovelling the snow off the roof of the house. Not to disturb any one, he entered the spare room by the door which led into the garden, as he had left a spade in that room on a previous occasion, and did not know any one was lying there. To his astonishment he found a woman in the bed, with her throat cut from ear to ear, and evident marks of a struggle visible in her torn clothes and the disordered bed-clothes. The first thing he did was to call the priest, who appeared paralysed with fear and dismay. The mayor and other village authorities were then summoned, and quickly assembled in the room, in order to go through the forms which the law of France requires on such occasions. Near the bed of the murdered woman was found a razor, which was recognised as belonging to the priest, and with this weapon, which was covered

with blood, the murder had no doubt been committed. The doctor of the village gave it as his opinion, that the unfortunate woman had been outraged before being murdered, and that she had been dead for some hours. There were footsteps of a man's foot discovered in the snow, leading from the window of the room in which the priest slept, to the outside door of the room opening into the garden in which the murder had taken place, and these marks corresponded exactly in size with a pair of shoes which were found hidden under some rubbish in the garden, which were dirty as having been lately used, and were also spotted with blood. These shoes were recognised as belonging to the priest. In the same place a white cotton handkerchief, upon which some person had evidently wiped blood from his hands and fingers, was also found, and this also was proved to belong to the priest. The woman had not been murdered for the sake of whatever money or valuables she had about her, for her purse, containing three or four gold pieces and some silver, was found on a chair near the bed, and hanging round her neck were a small gold cross, and a silver box or case such as are used in Roman Catholic countries to contain relics. No person had been seen near the priest's house during the day or evening previous to the murder, and the old housekeeper declared that, during the night in which the deed had been committed, she had not heard any noise or struggle. But it was shown that, as her room was some distance from that in which the murdered woman had slept, she might not have heard what was taking place there, even if there had been a noise. It was, however, proved that the priest's room was so near the room in which the murder had taken place, that it was almost impossible for him not to have heard a disturbance there. The priest himself declared that he had slept sound, and had heard nothing. The shoes which were found in the garden he acknowledged to be his, but said they had been kept for some considerable time in a cupboard in the room where the murdered woman had slept, as they were a pair which he did not use in the winter months. The handkerchief he also said was his, but declared that, on the previous evening at supper, he had lent it to the woman, who had told him she had none of her own, to tie round her head during the night. He could not account for the razor being found in the room. Altogether, the evidence against him was considered so strong that he was sent to prison, and, in due time, was brought to trial, on the accusation of having outraged and then murdered the woman who had slept in his house.

In those days the public feeling and prejudice against priests were very strong in France. Moreover, then as now, every man put on his trial in that country was considered guilty until he could prove himself innocent. The priest was tried, cross-questioned, badgered, and questioned again, until he hardly knew what he said or what he denied. The evidence against him was purely circumstantial, but it was strongly adverse. Moreover, it came out—or was brought to light by the Procureur-Royal—that, long ago, ten years before he became a priest, when he was a mere boy, he had been strongly suspected of an intrigue with a married woman. Of course, this fact—which, in England, would not for a moment have been admitted in evidence—was made the most of. To make a long story short, he was found guilty of both charges, and condemned to death, from which he was saved at the last moment by court influence, as the Bourbons, who were then in power, disliked the idea of a priest suffering an ignominious death on the scaffold. His sentence was commuted to the galleys for life, and he was sent off, a condemned felon, to work in chains for the rest of his days in the Bagne at Brest.

This unfortunate man was chained to a prisoner convicted of most atrocious crimes, and, day or night, night or day, the chain that linked these two together was never undone. The blasphemy which sounded all day and every day in his ears, was augmented tenfold by the miscreants who surrounded him when they discovered that he had been, and, indeed, was yet, a minister of religion. By day, in cold, or wet, or heat, he had to toil in the dockyards at work, which he had neither the strength of body to endure, nor the knowledge how to make the best of. Blows and oaths from the prisoners' warders were amongst the least of the evils he had to submit to in mute dispair. All prisoners condemned in France to the galleys were treated not only worse than the brutes that perish, but as if the chief end and aim of their punishment were to harden them in vice, and make them reckless of the laws of God and man. But this unfortunate priest was treated far worse than the others, for he was the everlasting butt, and at him were levied all the most horrible jokes, of all his fellow-prisoners.

How he endured this existence, after his peaceful life as a country parish priest, seems little short of a miracle. And yet he did endure it, not only for a few, but for more than four-and-twenty years. He had been all this time a condemned galley-slave, when a soldier in one of the French colonies, being on his death-bed, confessed, first in private to a priest, and afterwards publicly before the authorities, how he was the real culprit who had committed the crime for which poor Monsieur Flammand had been judged guilty. He gave full and particular details how he had entered the room where the girl slept, with the intention of stealing whatever he could find. How he had found the woman sleeping there, had committed the double crime of which the priest had been accused, and had used the shoes, which he found in the cupboard, for the purpose of throwing suspicion on the priest, making it appear as if the latter had walked from his own window across the garden to the door of the girl's room. The handkerchief he declared he had found on the bed, but did not know that it belonged to the priest.

The razor he declared he had found in the same cupboard as the shoes, and, feeling sure that it must belong to the priest, had, after murdering the girl with it, purposely left it in a conspicuous place, so as to cause people to believe that the foul deed had been committed by the priest. All he had cared for at the time, he said, was to divert the scent of justice from himself. He was a native of the place where the murder took place, and had, a few hours after committing the crime, formed one of the crowd that went to the priest's house, where he was one of the loudest to declare that it must have been the priest, and no other, who murdered the unhappy woman. He had shortly after left his native place, taken service as a substitute in the army, and, after some twenty-four years' service, did, on his death-bed, make the confession which exonerated Monsieur Flammand.

As a matter of course, the poor priest was in due time released from the Bagne, and restored to all his civil rights. His bishop offered several times to reinstate him in a parish, but he invariably, respectfully and firmly, declined. The reason he gave was, that the twenty-four years spent amongst the forçats at Brest had rendered him unfit and unworthy ever to officiate again at the altar. He continued a most devoutly religious man, but said that if God spared his life to the utmost age given unto man, it would barely suffice to purify his soul from the moral contagion of that hell upon earth, the Bagne. He retired to a part of France where he was not known, and, although he dressed as the French clergy do when not officiating in the church, he never entered a church save as the humblest layman might have done. He never told his story but to one or two intimate friends. When I knew him he had been set at liberty some eight or nine years, and not long ago I heard that he was dead.

EXCEEDINGLY ODD FELLOWS.

George has told you about his account at the Post-office Savings-bank, and would have you believe that he was a model of prudence, and all that sort of thing.* But I could tell you a different story. Not that I mind what he says about me being aggravating, and sitting and saying nothing, and that being worse than nagging, for I despise such insinuations; but George, though he is my husband, and as kind and good a man as ever breathed, is a fool with his money, and that's the truth. His putting money in the Post-office Savings-bank is just a fad, and I feel certain that if I don't look after him, he will make ducks and drakes of it after all. He told you that he is an Odd Fellow. Well do I know it. The state that he comes home in after the lodge meetings, which are held at that horrid Yorkshire Grey, is dreadful. To hear him coming up to bed at two o'clock in the morning, you would think they was shooting coals up the stairs. And then when he comes into the bedroom, trying to walk straight and holding on by the chest of drawers, and I give him a look, he says, "Don't look like that, Susan; you know I have been at the lodge providing for a rainy day, and doing my duty to my family." I must say this of George, that always when he's been providing for a rainy day and doing his duty to his family, he comes home smelling of rum with lemon.

When George first joined the Odd Fellows I thought it was a very good thing, for he told me, that by paying in a small sum every month, he would get ten shillings a week if he ever happened to be laid up, and ten pounds for burial expenses if he died, which of course would be a nice thing to have, and one-and-ninepence a month not too much to pay for it. But after a bit there were so many lodge meetings, and George so often coming home tight, that I began to think one-and-ninepence couldn't do it, so I was determined to get to the bottom of it, and one day I catechised him.

"Whatever do you do at that lodge, George?" I says. "Do," he says, "why, transact business, of course." "But it surely doesn't take you till two o'clock in the morning," I says. "Oh yes it does," he says; "the business is sometimes very heavy, and there's a great many accounts to go through, and the affairs of the order to discuss, and lots of things—lor' bless you, you have no idea what a great society ours is; it's bigger than the Freemasons': we have hundreds of thousands of members all over the country, and more than a million of money, and an Act of Parliament all to our own selves." Well, of course, when he told me that they had so much money, and an Act of Parliament all to themselves, I thought it must be all right. But, by-and-by, there was a deal too much of the lodge to please me. Whenever I wanted him to come home early, or to take me to the theatre, it was always "I can't to-night, Susan, for I've to go to the lodge." "But it ain't the lodge night, George," I used to say. "No," he would answer, "but there's a special meeting to-night, and I must not miss it, as I expect soon to be G. M." "Why, what's that?" I says. "Oh," he says, "Grand Master, Susan, which is the highest office there is in our society, and an honour to them as is elected to it." "Well," I says, "George, it may be a very fine thing for you to be G. M., but it ain't pleasant for me sitting here moping at home night after night till one, two, three, and four in the morning, and you always coming home smelling as you do of rum, which doesn't look to me like business."

I was determined to know what they did at the lodge; and so one night, when I thought George and the members would be in the midst of their business, I put on my bonnet and shawl and a thick dotted veil, walked down to the Yorkshire Grey, and slipped into the parlour, which I knew was next to the large room where the Odd Fellows held their meetings. I

* See page 79 of the present volume: My Account with Her Majesty.

had a glass of shrub and a biscuit, and told the young man that, as I was rather tired, I would sit and rest myself a bit. Well, I hadn't been there five minutes before I heard voices in the next room, and George's above all, crying, "Order, order!" And then I heard somebody say, "Oh, bother the accounts; put them books away, and let's get to business." "Hear, hear!" everybody cried, and there was a tremendous knocking on the tables, and a voice called out, "Give your orders, gentlemen, the waiter is in the room;" and then there was a scuffling about and a chinking of glasses, and after a little delay a voice cried out, "Tile the door, Joseph, Brother Bensley will oblige." I heard a bolt go, there was more knocking on the tables, and then somebody—Brother Bensley, I suppose—began to sing the "Haymakers" through his nose, and after each verse they all took up the chorus. At the end of this song, which seemed to be applauded with hammers, I heard another voice ask, "What shall we say after that, Brother Bensley?" and Brother Bensley replied, "May the present moment be the worst of our lives." Everybody cried "Hear, hear, hear!" and the hammer went at it again. I stopped a full hour, and this sort of thing went on all the time. After each song, it was always, "Give your orders, gentlemen, the waiter is in the room;" and then, "Tile the door, Joseph, Brother this, that, or the other will oblige;" then the bolt went, and the song began, and the company took up the chorus and clapped their hands and knocked, and made such a noise as I never heard.

Well, I couldn't with conscience remain any longer on a glass of shrub and a biscuit, so I went away and took a walk as far as John's, and stopped with Jane for more than an hour, and went back again to the Yorkshire Grey about eleven; and would you believe it, they were still at it, singing choruses and hammering on the tables like mad. And I hadn't listened outside for more than five minutes, before I heard my George singing Home sweet Home, and I knew very well by his voice what state he was in. Some women would have walked right into the room and had him out there and then; but whatever my feelings may be, a thing I never will do is to go and fetch my husband out of the public-house. If a man demeans himself in such a place, that's no reason a woman should; and from all I hear you don't get anything by it but dirt thrown in your face, as the publican always sides with his customers, and a wife as goes and interferes with her husband, when he is spending his money and enjoying himself, is looked upon as a curse. So I didn't wait to see or hear any more, but went straight home, and, the fire not being out, sat up for George, determined to give him a bit of my mind for once. It was past one when he arrived. I knew what state he was in before he came in, by the way he boggled with the latch-key, which is a thing I am sorry I ever consented to, and which I might have nipped in the bud if I had begun in time; but let such things only take root, and grow, and it's a charter ever afterwards. You wouldn't believe the artfulness of George when he's half-seas over.

I often wonder how he can do it, with the drink in and the wit out as it is, when he comes home in that state? He'll stand just for a minute in the passage to balance himself, and then he'll come in with a bounce to make believe that he's brisk, and steady, and all right. And always when he comes in like that he smiles—oh, so idiotic!—and says, "Well." And I says, "Is it well?" and gives him a look which he can't abear, I know. "Don't be angry, Susan?" he says; "I didn't intend to stop out so late, but the business of the lodge was rather heavy to-night, and——" "Fiddlesticks!" I says. "Oh, don't talk like that, Susan," he says; "you know it's for my good and yours too." "What!" I says, "drinking, and smoking, and singing songs to this hour in the morning! it's for the good of the Yorkshire Grey—that's whose good it's for. I know what your business is—it's hip, hip, hurrah, bravo, a very good song, and very well sung; give your orders, gentlemen, the waiter's in the room; tile the door, Joseph, Brother George will oblige with Home, sweet Home. Oh, you like your sweet home better than the Yorkshire Grey, don't you?" "Susan," he says, "I can't stand this." "No," I says, "you can't abear to be told of your faults; but you shan't complain that I'm aggravating because I sit and say nothing; I intend to speak my mind, now, and I tell you, George, you are a great big pigeon that flies down every other night to the Yorkshire Grey to be plucked. Odd Fellows, indeed. Old fools you are, the lot of you."

You should have seen how George opened his eyes to hear me come out like that. He flopped down in a chair, and sat staring at me like a stuck pig, and all he said was "La, Susan." "You know now what I think of you, George," I says, "and let me tell you that I know all about your Odd Fellows' Society, and your lodge nights, and your courts, and your benefits, and all the rest of the rubbish." "Rubbish!" he says. "Rubbish," I says; "what's all this but rubbish?" and I out with the drawer and flung all his regalia, as he calls them, in a heap before him on the floor. "What do you call this?" I says, and I took them up one by one—a blue sash embroidered with the arms of the order, a ridiculous thing for all the world like the picture in Zadkiel's almanack, a satin apron, a silk velvet collar, a gold sash tie, a silver star, a gold tassel, and two rosettes. "One would think," I says, "that you was a sweep, and that you had got all these rags together to go out with Jack-in-the-Green on the first of May. And here's the bill," I says; "sash with the ridiculous arms of the order, eight-and-six; apron six shillings, collar five shillings, sash-tie one-and-nine, star one-and-six, tassel one-and-nine, rosettes three-and-six—total, one pound nine shillings, and all to make a guy of yourself." "Well, but you know, Susan," he says, "these things are necessary to distinguish the

order and keep it together." "And a pretty thing to keep together," I says, "if all be true." "All be true," he says, "what do you mean?" "I mean," I says, "what's written in this book, which my brother John gave me last night, and told me to be sure and read it to you." "What book is it?" he says. "It's what they call a blue-book," I says. "La, Susan," he says, "who would have thought of you reading a blue-book?" "I shouldn't have thought it myself," I says, "for I always thought as they were dry things as nobody ever did read, but used to wrap up butter and light the fire with; but I find different," I says, "for this blue-book, which is by Mr. Tidd Pratt, a gentleman under government, tells a many things which it is only right that every working man's wife should know. If you are able to keep your eyes open," I says, "just listen to this, which is the evidence of a working man like yourself, who was fool enough to go and be an Odd Fellow: 'It has been the custom among the members ever since the commencement of this society, which was in 1837, to spend in drink every club night at the rate of threepence from every member, which was taken out of the contributions, and which will amount up to the present time to 367*l.* 4*s.* Every member was compelled to pay one shilling for drink on the feast day, whether he came or not, besides eight shillings a year spent for drink on committee nights, and for the last seventeen years it exceeds nine shillings a year, and sixpence extra paid for every person becoming a member on club nights, and one shilling extra on becoming a member on feast days.' And here's the bill all regularly made out. Spent in drink, from 9th September, 1837, to 15th October, 1862:

	£	s.	d.
On club nights	367	4	0
On feast nights	176	15	0
On committee nights	10	17	0
Extra paid by members	13	4	0
	£568	0	0

And all this, besides what the members spent on their own account, for the benefit of the public-house where the lodge was held. Another working man tells us that his lodge paid eighteen pounds for a flag and ten pounds for a drum. Now, what on earth a sick fund wants with a drum, is past my comprehension. And perhaps you will just listen to what this poor man says: 'They have turned me out,' he says, 'because I would not pay for the dinner I never had. They are in the habit, every feast day, of taking so much money out of the box towards drinking—generally about thirty shillings, I think—also sixpence each towards the dinner. There are one or two teetotallers in the club, so last feast day (this I know for a fact) they had taken some money out of the box for drink; one of these teetotallers asked for a glass of teetotal drink; he was refused, and told that he might buy it for himself. Some of the other members stopped till two or three o'clock the next morning to finish the drink bought with the money taken out of the box. Three or four of them were found next morning in a beastly state of intoxication, and carried home.' And that's the way you Odd Fellows provide for a rainy day, and do your duty to your families. And here's a nice bill to be charged to the funds of a benevolent society supported by poor working men:

	£	s.	d.
Liquor at monthly meeting	9	0	0
Band at anniversary	6	0	0
Dinners to persons carrying banners	0	6	9
Donation to Lancashire Relief Fund	5	0	0
Grant for procession to dinner on the marriage of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales	10	0	0

Why," I says, "it's nothing but liquor and foolery from beginning to end; ale, grog, dinners, banners, drums, flags, processions, and getting drunk, and all at the expense of the fund that ought to go for sickness and funerals. If you could all be buried in drums," I says, "you might have them, with silk flags painted on both sides with the arms of the order for winding-sheets, but as for coffins, I don't know where they are to come from."

I declare, if George wasn't a nodding and fast asleep as a church. "George," I says, "you have had your evening, and now I'll have mine;" and I stirred him up and made him listen. "Look here," I says, "what Mr. Tidd Pratt says, a gentleman as is under government, and his business to know all about. 'The older you get,' he says, 'the worse you get; and in one year,' he says, 'no less than one hundred and thirty-seven friendly societies have been dissolved and wound up,' through not being able to carry on, their expenses being greater than they could afford, all along of ale, and dinners, and drums, and such-like things, as are contrary to the Act of Parliament, which you have all to yourselves, and which you are so proud of. You brag about your Act of Parliament, but do you know what it says?" "No," he says, "I never read it, and I suppose nobody ever did." "Oh yes," I says, "I have, and I can tell you that ale, and feasts, and banners, and drums taken out of the funds, is contrary to the act, and, what's more," I says, "proceedings may be taken against you for paying away the funds for any such purpose, and I've a great mind to write to Mr. Tidd Pratt about your doings at the Yorkshire Grey." "Oh, bother Mr. Tidd Pratt," he says, "I want to go to bed;" and with that he gets up and bolts out of the room, and up-stairs, and when I goes up, three minutes after, he is sprawling all over the bed, and snoring like a bull, and there was his clothes lying scattered over the room, and his money out of his waistcoat-pocket lying all about the floor. Now, I'm not one to search my husband's pockets, but when I find money lying about in that promiscuous manner, it's only natural that I should pick it up and count it. Well, there was three shillings in silver, half a screw of tobacco, and threepence-halfpenny in coppers, and, to my

certain knowledge, when George went out to go to the Yorkshire Grey he had a bright half sovereign in his pocket; so that on that one lodge night he had spent six shillings and eightpence-halfpenny, which is very nigh five shillings over and above his subscription. So I don't wonder that he bolted away to bed and wouldn't listen. That's where it is. They can't abear to be told the truth about their societies, for they know in their hearts that drink and drums is at the bottom of them. It's my belief that if there were no public-houses there would be no Odd Fellows, and Foresters, and Ancient Druids, and other fools of the kind. I've heard my brother John say, and now I believe it, that it's the badges, and the flags, and the bands of music that attracts members, just like recruiting for soldiers and slipping the shilling into poor young lads' hands, when they're dazzled with the ribbons and the fine uniform, and too much beer.

George was very fast in telling you all about his savings in the Post-office bank; but he didn't tell you that he once insured in the Bird-in-the-Hand Provident Association, and paid for two years, when the board was had up before the magistrate for swindling, and they broke into the office, and found it nothing but a back room at a corn-chandler's, with no furniture except three dirty tobacco-pipes and a beer can, which had been a missing from the public-house at the corner for months, and the chairman of the board, on being accused of it, took a bitter oath that he'd never seen the can, when he had been a using it all the time to boil his coffee. The Bird-in-the-Hand gave out that it had five thousand pounds in the Bloomsbury Bank, but when they went and searched the books, they were told that it had only sixteen shillings there, and never had more than twenty pounds at any time. Whenever anybody died, the Bird-in-the-Hand disputed its liability, and the people were all too poor to make a stir about it and have justice.

It's true George has got a bit of money laid by now, but what I'm afraid of is that he will be doing something foolish with it. I'm sure he's been bragging about his account out of doors, for there's scarcely a day passes that he doesn't get letters wanting him to take shares in all kinds of companies and associations for the benefit of the working classes, and circulars besides from people that make regalia and badges, and banners, and satin aprons, and all such rubbish.

I read in my paper, which is the Penny Newsman, that Mr. Gladstone is going to set up insurance offices for the working classes at the Post-office Savings-banks. I hear that there's great opposition to it—by the publicans, I shouldn't wonder—but I'm sure if parliament was only composed of working men's wives the bill would be carried unanimously. It's just what the working man wants, for as things are now he doesn't know where to go for safety, and the way that lords and baronets and the aristocracy put their names to offices and societies, that never do anything but go into Chancery and wind up, is really shameful, and a snare to them as haven't got the education and knowledge to judge for themselves. I'm no politician myself, but, as a working man's wife as knows how the money goes, I'm sure what Mr. Gladstone proposes to do is good, and if he would only go a little further, and make the Post-offices sick funds as well, he will be the best friend the working classes ever had.

And bless him! I say, for the duty he has taken off the tea, and the bottle of brandy that you can now get at the grocer's, without sending the girl to the public-house, where the fellows get larking with her, leading to crinolines and red petticoats and ruin. Why, at Plumberry's, where I often buy my tea, we can now get brandy, gin, rum, and any kind of wine; and I'm sure, if George would only buy his bottle of rum there, and bring it home and have his glass by the fireside with me (or a mate from the shop, too, if he likes), it would cost him less money; he would have no headache, and he'd be a deal more pleasant to all parties, next morning.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER VII. DISSENSION.

The knowledge Calvert now possessed of the humble relations which had subsisted between Miss Grainger and his uncle's family, had rendered him more confident in his manner, and given him even a sort of air of protection towards them. Certain it is, each day made him less and less a favourite at the villa, while Loyd, on the other hand, grew in esteem and liking with every one of them. A preference which, with whatever tact shrouded, showed itself in various shapes.

"I perceive," said Calvert one morning, as they sat at breakfast together, "my application for an extension of leave is rejected. I am ordered to hold myself in readiness to sail with drafts for some regiments in Upper India!" he paused for a few seconds, and then continued: "I'd like any one to tell me what great difference there is in real condition between an Indian officer and a transported felon. In point of daily drudgery there is little, and as for climate the felon has the best of it."

"I think you take too dreary a view of your fortune. It is not the sort of career I would choose, nor would it suit me, but if my lot had fallen that way, I suspect I'd not have found it so unendurable."

"No. It would not suit you. There's no scope in a soldier's life for those little sly practices, those small artifices of tact and ingenuity, by which subtlety does its work in this world. In such a career, all this adroitness would be clean thrown away."

"I hope," said Loyd, with a faint smile,

"that you do not imagine that these are the gifts to achieve success in any calling."

"I don't know—I am not sure, but I rather suspect they find their place at the Bar."

"Take my word for it, then, you are totally mistaken. It is an error just as unworthy of your good sense as it is of your good feeling!" And he spoke with warmth and energy.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" cried Calvert. "For three months I have been exploring to find one spot in your whole nature that would respond fiercely to attack, and at last I have it."

"You put the matter somewhat offensively to me, or I'd not have replied in this fashion—but let us change the topic, it is an unpleasant one."

"I don't think so. When a man nurtures what his friend believes to be a delusion, and a dangerous delusion, what better theme can there be than its discussion?"

"I'll not discuss it," said Loyd, with determination.

"You'll not discuss it?"

"No!"

"What if I force you? What if I place the question on grounds so direct and so personal that you can't help it?"

"I don't understand you."

"You shall presently. For some time back I have been thinking of asking an explanation from you—an explanation of your conduct at the villa. Before you had established an intimacy there, I stood well with every one. The old woman, with all her respect for my family and connexions, was profuse in her attentions. Of the girls, as I somewhat rashly confided to you, I had only to make my choice. I presented you to them, never anticipating that I was doing anything very dangerous to them or to myself, but I find I was wrong. I don't want to descend to details, nor inquire how and by what arts you gained your influence; my case is simply with the fact that, since *you* have been in favour, *I* have been out of it. My whole position with them is changed. I can only suggest now what I used to order, and I have the pleasure, besides, of seeing that even my suggestion must be submitted to you and await your approval."

"Have you finished?" said Loyd, calmly.

"No, far from it! I could make my charge extend over hours long. In fact, I have only to review our lives here for the last six or seven weeks, to establish all I have been saying, and show you that you owe me an explanation, and something more than an explanation."

"Have you done now?"

"If you mean, have I said all that I could say on this subject, no, far from it. You have not heard a fiftieth part of what I might say about it."

"Well, I have heard quite enough. My answer is this, you are totally mistaken; I never, directly or indirectly, prejudiced your position. I seldom spoke of you, never slightingly. I have thought, it is true, that you assumed towards these ladies a tone of superiority, which could not fail to be felt by them, and that the habit grew on you, to an extent you perhaps were not aware of; as, however, they neither complained of, nor resented it, and as, besides, you were far more a man of the world than myself, and consequently knew better what the usages of society permitted, I refrained from any remark, nor, but for your present charge, would I say one word now on the subject."

"So, then, you have been suffering in secret all this time over my domineering and insolent temper, pitying the damsels in distress, but not able to get up enough of Quixotism to avenge them?"

"Do you want to quarrel with me, Calvert?" said the other, calmly.

"If I knew what issue it would take, perhaps I could answer you."

"I'll tell you, then, at least so far as I am concerned, I have never injured, never wronged you. I have therefore nothing to recal, nothing to redress, upon any part of my conduct. In what you conceive you are personally interested, I am ready to give a full explanation, and this done, all is done between us."

"I thought so, I suspected as much," said Calvert, contemptuously. "I was a fool to suppose you'd have taken the matter differently, and now nothing remains for me but to treat my aunt's nursery governess with greater deference, and be more respectful in the presence—the august presence—of a lawyer's clerk."

"Good-by, sir," said Loyd, as he left the room.

Calvert sat down and took up a book, but though he read three full pages, he knew nothing of what they contained. He opened his desk, and began a letter to Loyd, a farewell letter, a justification of himself, but done more temperately than he had spoken; but he tore it up, and so with a second and a third. As his passion mounted, he bethought him of his cousin and her approaching marriage. "I can spoil some fun there," cried he, and wrote as follows:

"Lago d'Orta, August 12.

"Dear Sir,—In the prospect of the nearer relations which a few days more will establish between us, I venture to address you thus familiarly. My cousin, Miss Sophia Calvert, has informed me by a letter I have just received that she deemed it her duty to place before you a number of letters written by me to her, at a time when there subsisted between us a very close attachment. With my knowledge of my cousin's frankness, her candour, and her courage—for it would also require some courage—I am fully persuaded that she has informed you thoroughly on all that has passed. We were both very young, very thoughtless, and, worse than either, left totally to our own guidance, none to watch, none to look after us. There is no indiscretion in my saying that we were both very much in love, and with that sort of confidence in each other that renders distrust a crime

to one's own conscience. Although, therefore, she may have told you much, her womanly dignity would not let her dwell on these circumstances, explanatory of much, and palliative of all that passed between us. To you, a man of the world, I owe this part declaration, less, however, for your sake or for mine, than for her, for whom either of us ought to make any sacrifice in our power.

"The letters she wrote me are still in my possession. I own they are very dear to me; they are all that remain of a past, to which nothing in my future life can recal the equal. I feel, however, that your right to them is greater than my own, but I do not know how to part with them. I pray you advise me in this. Say how you would act in a like circumstance, knowing all that has occurred, and be assured that your voice will be a command to your very devoted servant,

"H. C.

"P.S.—When I began this letter, I was minded to say my cousin should see it; on second thoughts, I incline to say not, decidedly not."

When this base writer had finished writing he flung down the pen, and said to himself, half aloud, "I'd give something to see him read this!"

With a restless impatience to do something—anything, he left the house, walking with hurried steps to the little jetty where the boats lay. "Where's my boat, Onofrio?" said he, asking for the skiff he generally selected.

"The other signor has taken her across the lake."

"This is too much," muttered he. "The fellow fancies that because he skulks a satisfaction, he is free to practise an impertinence. He knew I preferred this boat, and therefore he took her."

"Jump in, and row me across to La Rocca," said he to the boatman. As they skimmed across the lake, his mind dwelt only on vengeance, and fifty different ways of exacting it passed and repassed before him. All, however, concentrating on the one idea—that to pass some insult upon Loyd in presence of the ladies would be the most fatal injury he could inflict, but how to do this without a compromise of himself was the difficulty.

"Though no woman will ever forgive a coward," thought he, "I must take care that the provocation I offer be such as will not exclude myself from sympathy." And, with all his craft and all his cunning, he could not hit upon a way to this. He fancied, too, that Loyd had gone over to prejudice the ladies against him by his own version of what had occurred in the morning. He knew well how, of late, he himself had not occupied the highest place in their esteem—it was not alone the insolent and overbearing tone he assumed, but a levity in talking of things which others treated with deference, alike offensive to morals and manners—these had greatly lowered him in their esteem, especially of the girls, for old Miss Grainger, with a traditional respect for his name and family, held to him far more than the others.

"What a fool I was ever to have brought the fellow here! What downright folly it was in me to have let them ever know him. Is it too late, however, to remedy this? Can I not yet undo some of this mischief?" This was a new thought, and it filled his mind till he landed. As he drew quite close to the shore he saw that the little awning-covered boat, in which the ladies occasionally made excursions on the lake, was now anchored under a large drooping ash, and that Loyd and the girls were on board of her. Loyd was reading to them; at least so the continuous and equable tone of his voice indicated, as it rose in the thin and silent air. Miss Grainger was not there—and this was a fortunate thing—for now he should have his opportunity to talk with her alone, and probably ascertain to what extent Loyd's representations had damaged him.

He walked up to the villa, and entered the drawing-room, as he was wont, by one of the windows that opened on the green sward without. There was no one in the room, but a half-written letter, on which the ink was still fresh, showed that the writer had only left it at the instant. His eye caught the words, "Dear and Reverend Sir," and in the line beneath the name Loyd. The temptation was too strong, and he read on:

"Dear and Reverend Sir,—I hasten to express my entire satisfaction with the contents of your letter. Your son, Mr. Loyd, has most faithfully represented his position and his prospects, and, although my niece might possibly have placed her chances of happiness in the hands of a wealthier suitor, I am fully assured she never could have met with one whose tastes, pursuits, and general disposition——"

A sound of coming feet startled him, and he had but time to throw himself on a sofa, when Miss Grainger entered. Her manner was cordial—fully as cordial as usual—perhaps a little more so, since, in the absence of her nieces, she was free to express the instinctive regard she felt towards all that bore his name.

"How was it that you did not come with Loyd?" asked she.

"I was busy, writing letters I believe—congratulations on Sophy's approaching marriage; but what did Loyd say—was that the reason he gave?"

"He gave none. He said he took a whim into his head to row himself across the lake; and, indeed, I half suspect the exertion was too much for him. He has been coughing again, and the pain in the side has returned."

"He's a wretched creature—I mean as regards health and strength. Of course he always must have been so; but the lives these fellows lead in London would breach the constitution of a really strong man."

"Not Loyd, however; he never kept late hours, nor had habits of dissipation."

"I don't suppose he ever told you that he had," said he, laughing. "I conclude that he has never shown you his diary of town life."

"But do you tell me, seriously, that he is a man of dissipated habits?"

"Not more so than eight out of every ten, perhaps, in his class of life. The student is everywhere more given to the excitements of vice than the sportsman. It is the compensation for the wearisome monotony of brain labour, and they give themselves up to excesses from which the healthier nature of a man with country tastes would revolt at once. But what have I to do with his habits? I am not his guardian nor his confessor."

"But they have a very serious interest for *me*."

"Then you must look for another counsellor. I am not so immaculate that I can arraign others; and, if I were, I fancy I might find some pleasanter occupation."

"But if I tell you a secret, a great secret——"

"I'd not listen to a secret. I detest secrets, just as I'd hate to have the charge of another man's money. So, I warn you, tell me nothing that you don't want to hear talked of at dinner, and before the servants."

"Yes; but this is a case in which I really need your advice."

"You can't have it at the price you propose. Not to add, that I have a stronger sentiment to sway me in this case, which you will understand at once, when I tell you that he is a man of whom I would like to speak with great reserve, for the simple reason that I don't like him."

"Don't like him! You don't like him!"

"It does seem very incredible to you; but I must repeat it, I don't like him."

"But will you tell me why? What are the grounds of your dislike?"

"Is it not this very moment I have explained to you that my personal feeling towards him inspires a degree of deference which forbids me to discuss his character? He may be the best fellow in Europe, the bravest, the boldest, the frankest, the fairest. All I have to say is, that if I had a sister, and he proposed to marry her, I'd rather see her a corpse than his wife; and now you have half led me into a confession that I told you I'd not enter upon. Say another word about it, and I'll go and ask Loyd to come up here and listen to the discussion, for I detest secrets and secresy, and I'll have nothing to say to either."

"You'd not do anything so rash and inconsiderate?"

"Don't provoke me, that's all. You are always telling me you know the Calverts, their hot-headedness, their passionate warmth, and so on. I leave it to yourself, is it wise to push me further?"

"May I show you a letter I received yesterday morning, in reply to one of mine?"

"Not if it refers to Loyd."

"It does refer to him."

"Then I'll not read it. I tell you, for the last time, I'll not be cheated into this discussion. I don't desire to have it said of me some fine morning, 'You talked of the man that you lived with on terms of intimacy. You chummed with him, and yet you told stories of him.'"

"If you but knew the difficulty of the position in which you have placed me——"

"I know at least the difficulty in which you would have placed *me*, and I am resolved not to incur it. Have I given you Sophy's letter to read?" said he, with a changed voice. "I must fetch it out to you and let you see all that she says of her future happiness." And thus, by a sudden turn, he artfully engaged her in recollections of Rocksley, and all the persons and incidents of a remote long ago!

When Loyd returned with the girls to the house, Calvert soon saw that he had not spoken to them of the altercation of the morning—a reserve which he ungenerously attributed to the part Loyd himself filled in the controversy. The two met with a certain reserve; but which, however felt and understood by each, was not easily marked by a spectator. Florence, however, saw it, with the traditional clearness of an invalid. She read what healthier eyes never detect. She saw that the men had either quarrelled, or were on the brink of a quarrel, and she watched them closely and narrowly. This was the easier for her, as at meal times she never came to table, but lay on a sofa, and joined in the conversation at intervals.

Oppressed by the consciousness of what had occurred in the morning, and far less able to conceal his emotions or master them than his companion, Loyd was disconcerted and ill at ease; now answering at cross-purposes, now totally absorbed in his own reflections. As Calvert saw this, it encouraged him to greater efforts to be agreeable. He could, when he pleased, be a most pleasing guest. He had that sort of knowledge of people and life which seasons talk so well, and suits so many listeners. He was curious to find out to which of the sisters Loyd was engaged, but all his shrewdness could not fix the point decisively. He talked on incessantly, referring occasionally to Loyd to confirm what he knew well the other's experience could never have embraced, and asking frankly, as it were, for his opinion on people he was fully aware the other had never met with.

Emily (or Milly, as she was familiarly called) Walter showed impatience more than once at these sallies, which always made Loyd confused and uncomfortable, so that Calvert leaned to the impression that it was she herself was the chosen one. As for Florence, she rather enjoyed, he thought, the awkward figure Loyd presented, and she even laughed outright at his bashful embarrassment.

"Yes," said Calvert to himself, "Florence is with me. She is my ally. I'm sure of her."

"What spirits he has," said Miss Grainger, as she brought the sick girl her coffee. "I never

saw him in a gayer mood. He's bent on tormenting Loyd though, for he has just proposed a row on the lake, and that he should take one boat and Loyd the other, and have a race. He well knows who'll win."

"That would be delightful, aunt. Let us have it by all means. Mr. Calvert, I engage *you*. You are to take *me*. Emily will go with Mr. Loyd."

"And I'll stand at the point and be the judge," said Miss Grainger.

Calvert never waited for more, but springing up, hastened down to the shore to prepare the boat. He was soon followed by Miss Grainger, with Florence leaning on her arm, looking brighter and fairer than he thought he had ever seen her.

"Let us be off at once," whispered Calvert, "for I'd like a few hundred yards' practice—a sort of trial gallop—before I begin;" and, placing the sick girl tenderly in the stern, he pulled vigorously out into the lake. "What a glorious evening!" said he. "Is there anything in the world can equal one of these sunsets on an Italian lake, with all the tints of the high Alps blending softly on the calm water?"

She made no answer; and he went on enthusiastically about the scene, the hour, the stillness, and the noble sublimity of the gigantic mountains which arose around them.

Scarcely, however, had Calvert placed her in the boat, and pulled out vigorously from the shore, than he saw a marked change come over the girl's face. All the laughing gaiety of a moment back was gone, and an expression of anxiety had taken its place.

"You are not ill?" asked he, eagerly.

"No. Why do you ask me?"

"I was afraid—I fancied you looked paler. You seem changed."

"So I am," said she, seriously. "Answer me what I shall ask, but tell me frankly."

"That I will; what is it?"

"You and Loyd have quarrelled—what was it about?"

"What a notion! Do you imagine that the silly quizzing that passes between young men implies a quarrel?"

"No matter what I fancy; tell me as candidly as you said you would. What was the subject of your disagreement?"

"How peremptory you are," said he, laughing. "Are you aware that to give your orders in this fashion implies one of two things—a strong interest in me, or in my adversary?"

"Well, I accept the charge; now for the confession."

"Am I right, then, dearest Florence?" said he, ceasing to row, and leaning down to look the nearer at her. "Am I right, then, that your claim to this knowledge is the best and most indisputable?"

"Tell me what it is!" said she, and her pale face suddenly glowed with a deep flush.

"You guessed aright, Florence, we did quarrel; that is, we exchanged very angry words, though it is not very easy to say how the difference began, nor how far it went. I was dissatisfied with him. I attributed to his influence, in some shape or other, that I stood less well here—in *your* esteem, I mean—than formerly; and he somewhat cavalierly told me if there were a change I owed it to myself, that I took airs upon me, that I was haughty, presuming, and fifty other things of the same sort; and so, with an interchange of such courtesies, we grew at last to feel very warm, and finally reached that point where men—of the world, at least—understand discussion ceases, and something else succeeds."

"Well, go on," cried she, eagerly.

"All is told; there is no more to say. The lawyer did not see the thing, perhaps, in the same vulgar light that I did; he took his hat, and came over here. I followed him, and there's the whole of it."

"I think he was wrong to comment upon your manner, if not done from a sense of friendship, and led on to it by some admission on your part."

"Of course he was; and I am charmed to hear you say so."

She was silent for some time, leaning her head on her hand, and appearing deep in thought.

"Now that I have made *my* confession, will you let me have one of *yours?*" said he, in a low, soft voice.

"I'm not sure; what's it to be about?"

"It's about myself I want to question you."

"About yourself! Surely you could not have hit upon a sorrier adviser, or a less experienced counsellor than I am."

"I don't want advice, Florence, I only want a fact; and from all I have seen of you, I believe you will deal fairly with me."

She nodded assent, and he went on:

"In a few weeks more I shall be obliged to return to India; to a land I dislike, and a service I detest; to live amongst companions distasteful to me, and amidst habits and associations that, however endurable when I knew no better, are now become positively odious in my eyes. This is my road to rank, station, and honour. There is, however, another path; and if I relinquish this career, and give up all thought of ambition, I might remain in Europe—here, perhaps, on this very lake side—and lead a life of humble but unbroken happiness—one of those peaceful existences which poets dream of, but never realise, because it is no use in disparaging the cup of life till one has tasted and known its bitterness; and these men have not reached such experience—*I* have."

He waited for her to speak—he looked eagerly at her for a word—but she was silent.

"The confession I want from you, Florence, is this: could you agree to share this life with me?"

She shook her head and muttered, but what he could not catch.

"It would be too dreary, too sad-coloured, you think?"

"No," said she, "not that."

"You fear, perhaps, that these schemes of isolation have never succeeded; that weariness will come when there are no longer new objects to suggest interest or employment?"

"Not that," said she, more faintly.

"Then the objection must be myself. Florence, is it that you would not, that you could not, trust me with your happiness?"

"You ask for frankness, and you shall have it. I cannot accept your offer. My heart is no longer mine to give."

"And this—this engagement, has been for some time back?" asked he, almost sternly.

"Yes, for some time," said she, faintly.

"Am I acquainted with the object of it? Perhaps I have no right to ask this. But there is a question I have full and perfect right to ask. How, consistently with such an engagement, have you encouraged the attentions I have paid you?"

"Attentions! and to me! Why, your attentions have been directed rather to my sister—at least, she always thought so—and even these we deemed the mere passing flirtations of one who made no secret of saying that he regarded marriage as an intolerable slavery, or rather, the heavy price that one paid for the pleasure of courtship."

"Are the mere levities with which I amused an hour to be recorded against me as principles?"

"Only when such levities fitted into each other so accurately as to show plan and contrivance."

"It was Loyd said that. That speech was his. I'd lay my life on it."

"I think not. At least, if the thought were his, he'd have expressed it far better."

"You admire him, then?" asked he, peering closely at her.

"I wonder why they are not here," said she, turning her head away. "This same race ought to come off by this time."

"Why don't you answer my question?"

"There he goes! Rowing away all alone, too, and my aunt is waving her handkerchief in farewell. See how fast he sends the boat through the water. I wonder why he gave up the race?"

"Shall I tell you? He dislikes whatever he is challenged to do. He is one of those fellows who will never dare to measure himself against another."

"My aunt is beckoning to us to come back, Mr. Calvert."

"And my taste is for going forward," muttered he, while at the same time he sent the boat's head suddenly round, and pulled vigorously towards the shore.

"May I trust that what has passed between us is a secret, not to be divulged to another—not even to your sister?"

"If you desire—if you exact."

"I do, most decidedly. It is shame enough to be rejected. I don't see why my disgrace is to be paraded either for pity or ridicule."

"Oh, Mr. Calvert——"

"Or triumphed over," said he, sternly, as he sent the boat up to the side of the little jetty, where Miss Grainger and her niece awaited them.

"Poor Loyd has just got bad news from home," said Miss Grainger, "and he has hastened back to ask, by telegraph, if they wish him to return."

"Any one ill, or dying?" asked Calvert, carelessly.

"No, it's some question of law about his father's vicarage. There would seem to be a doubt as to his presentation — whether the appointment lay with the patron or the bishop."

Calvert turned to mark how the girls received these tidings, but they had walked on, and with heads bent down, and close together, were deep in conversation.

"I thought it was only in my profession," said Calvert, sneeringly, "where corrupt patronage was practised. It is almost a comfort to think how much the good people resemble the wicked ones."

Miss Grainger, who usually smiled at his levities, looked grave at this one, and no more was said, as they moved on towards the cottage.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XX. LILY GOES OUT TO DINNER.

THE handsome lady, who, probably to serve her own purposes, had been bland and almost affable while the treaty of peace with the Bunny-castles and Mr. Drax was being concluded, was seemingly of a most capricious disposition. At all events, she informed Lily, so soon as they were outside the gate of Rhododendron House, that she would box her ears well, if she made any noise, or gave her any further trouble; and the child, quite unaccustomed to harsh treatment, or even threats, followed her new protectress in a very subdued, but scarcely cheerful manner.

The Clapham stage—peace to its short memory—was in existence in those days, and it was by means of this conveyance that Lily was brought to the metropolis. First of all, however, the lady took her into a pastrycook's shop, and bought her a very large Bath bun, which she apparently considered a sovereign remedy for all the sorrows of childhood, for when Lily had half eaten it, she said to her, not quite so sharply as before:

"Now, are you quite happy?"

Lily had not attained the summit of human felicity, but she deemed it expedient to temporise with a personage so stern as the personage who talked of boxing her ears. She murmured an affirmative.

"That's right," pursued the lady. "Be a gentle little darling, very sage and obedient, and I will love you. Don't vex me, or I shall have an attack of nerves. Satanée migraine, va!" This last remark she made in a language which Lily did not understand; and she noticed that the lady made remarks, in the same incomprehensible tongue, rather frequently. She noticed, also, that the lady, after bestowing on her the Bath bun, ate a macaroon herself, and called for a glass of cherry brandy; that, after drinking it, she declared it to be "detestable," and demanded a glass of water, the which beverage she characterised as "infamous poison." Likewise, Lily noted that her protectress apostrophised the young person in ribbons and ringlets who officiated behind the counter of the pastrycook as an "impertinent"—an impertinent, simply, not an impertinent anything—and that she vehemently protested that there was a bad half-penny among her change. The change itself she flung at the head of a beggar-boy, who was lurking at the door, licking his lips at sight of the greasy delicacies in the twopenny tray; but the handful of halfpence hurt the side of his head so that he yelped with pain, and forbore to thank her. Then, she swept out of the shop, nearly overturning an old gentleman in a white hat, who was seated on a cane-bottomed chair, meekly lunching on a sausage-roll, and leaving the young lady in ribbons and ringlets in semi-hysterics of indignant mortifications.

There were two inside places vacant in the Clapham stage, and Lily, for the second time in her life, was installed in a coach. She had been such a little recluse at school, that the great outside world seemed almost as strange to her as it might to a cloistered nun, transferred, for some occult monastic reason or other, from convent to convent.

Lily gazed about her as wistfully and as earnestly as ever a nun could do; but she wore no veil, nor had she a breviary; so she began to ask the lady a host of questions about the things on the road, which she saw from the windows of the stage; as who lived in those tall houses; why there were gates and bars across the road, with men in white aprons, and with red faces, who darted out of the little hovels, and seemed so angry—to judge from their hoarse voices—whenever a carriage came through. The lady was not very communicative. Once or twice, she said "Absurd!" Then, she cried "Peste!" At last, she bade the child be silent.

The journey, however, was saved from being entirely uneventful, by a few fierce verbal encounters between the lady and the two other inside passengers. One of these, a tall young man, with weak eyes, an eruptive countenance, speckled stockings and shoes, the lady accused of rudely staring at her. She called him several injurious names, and made him generally so miserable, that the young man, well-nigh moved to tears, got out at Kennington Common, foregoing half the amount of locomotion to which he was entitled. Then she had a passage of arms with an old gentleman in a bottle-green spencer and a frill, whom she charged with having wilfully trodden on her feet; but, in this last case, she had reckoned without her host, for it turned out

that the old gentleman had a temper of his own, and was not inclined to brook indignity with meekness.

"I didn't do anything of the sort, mum," quoth the old gentleman, with rising wrath, on the charge being repeated.

"Sir, you are gross! you are brutal! you are elephantine!" retorted the lady.

"Upon my word, I think the woman's mad," exclaimed the old gentleman. "I'm very glad that I'm not your husband, mum."

"Insolent: again your horrible boots are crushing my feet."

"Confound your feet!" screamed the old gentleman, in a fury. "I never touched 'em. Here, guard, guard, let me get out. And as for you, my darling," he continued, turning to Lily, "I wish you joy of your grandmother, and I wouldn't be in your shoes for something. Good morning, mum, and a more Christian temper to you!" And so saying, the old gentleman got out in dudgeon at the southern foot of Westminster-bridge.

They went on without any more adventures to the Golden-cross, Charing-cross, where they alighted. The lady and her charge swept away, and the coachman and the guard both turned their heads to look at them.

"Fine woman, Bill," observed the coachman.

"Good stepper!" agreed the guard; "stunning action and rattling pace. But ra-a-ther a kicker; eh, Josh?"

"I shouldn't like to be the splashboard," replied the coachman, "that she was in the pheayton of. Kick! She'd kick the Tower of London into toothpicks. Good 'un to bite, too, I should think. Say nothin' of rearin' and plungin'. She's a real live woman, Bill, and no mistake."

The subject of this criticism had hold pretty tightly of Lily's hand, and walked with her a few paces eastward. Then she stooped, and said:

"Ah! you've just come from school: you'd like to be amused, wouldn't you?"

It was certain that Lily hadn't been very much amused up to that moment; and she saw but little chance of recreation in the company of this very strange lady. She murmured something, however, which the hearer might construe pretty much as she chose; and the lady, electing to take the words as a sign of acquiescence, proceeded to amuse Lily.

She took her first into the Adelaide Gallery, which was then a kind of Polytechnic Institution, and crowded with numbers of models, and skeletons, and maps, and drawings, all supposed to conduce towards a knowledge of science among the million. The million were there, in the shape of many old ladies in beaver bonnets, and school-children, and raw bumpkins, and persons of the country-cousin order, generally. They poked their fingers into the models, and peered between the decks of the pretty toy-ships to see where the captain's cabin was, and gave themselves galvanic shocks, at which they danced, and—the younger ones—howled dismally. Then they inhaled doses of laughing gas. And then they had a stocking-weaving machine, and a steam-gun, explained to them, and tried hard to look as though they understood those scientific inventions. Subsequently Lily looked through a number of little round holes, and saw some very brilliant pictures, which, she was told, represented Lisbon, Chandernagore, Manilla, and the like: at the which she clapped her hands in not unfamiliar glee, for a man with a peep-show had once been admitted to the playground of Rhododendron House. The Bunnycastles took care to put his entertainment in the bills of the five-and-thirty boarders, under the head of "Admission to a geographical and pictorial exhibition." Then, at the ringing of a bell, they were conducted into a dark room, where an unseen gentleman with a hollow voice, as from the tombs, delivered a lecture, the preliminary part of which was so dreary and so full of long words, that it almost made Lily cry; and then he exhibited on an illuminated tablecloth, something that was like the spider at Rhododendron House, only magnified eight hundred million times; and to this strange presentment he gave a name to which that of rhododendron was monosyllabic. There was another lecture in another room from a pleasant gentleman with a bald head and a north country accent, who was surrounded by bottles and glasses, and poured the contents of one phial into another, and turned green water into red, and popped little twisted pieces of tow into them, whereupon they caught fire, and who seemed to be trying his very hardest to blow himself up—which, indeed, in his ardour for science, he did, on an average, once in six months. "A pleace the filin's oonder the receiver, and boobles of gass weell arise," quoth the bald-headed gentleman; and then bubbles of gas did arise, and there was a sharp crackling noise, and the audience clapped their hands, till another bell rang, and everybody ran off to see a patent potter's wheel, supposed to make any number of cups and saucers, elaborately painted, by merely touching a spring, but which habitually confined itself to spattering cascades of white mud upon the clothes of the spectators. Lily was delighted with everything, only somewhat confused, and the lecture with the magnified spider and the long name decidedly frightened her.

She was not sorry when, it being about three o'clock in the afternoon, they went out into the Strand again. The lady had swept through the Adelaide Gallery in the disdainful manner customary with her, and now and again sternly reprehending strangers for crowding upon her, or treading on the skirts of her robe. The country cousins, however, did not seem to mind her much, and one of them was venturous enough to ask if, the room not being big enough for her, she thought St. Paul's would be? Whereupon she tossed her head and looked Perkins's steam-guns at him. She condescended, however, to laugh at the galvanic shocks the cousins gave themselves, and remarked that the invention was droll.

Lily observed that when they were in the street she always held her very tight by the hand, and looked about her a great deal, and that once she told her, if any one tried to take her away, to allow herself to be torn in ten thousand pieces first.

"Not that there is any danger," she continued, more to herself than to Lily, "not that I am afraid. Oh no. I am strong—strong enough for ten armed men. But bah! let them come. What nonsense. My monsters are abroad. Are you hungry," she went on, looking down at the little girl.

Lily, accustomed to the early and regular meals of Rhododendron House, answered that she would like to have her dinner, if the lady pleased.

"Dinner!" repeated the lady. "Absurdity! You are to dine by and-by with the gentleman. You must wait. Come, little glutton, and have another cake."

She took the little glutton into another pastry-cook's, and presented her, as heretofore, with a Bath bun. But when Lily had picked the caraway seeds and the spiculæ of lump sugar off the sticky varnished surface, she found she had no appetite for the sweet, saffron-coloured dough beneath. She wanted her little plate of meat, and the potatoes that mashed up so nicely in the gravy. She longed for a slice of the plain school-pudding, at which the big girls used to grumble so, and to which they applied such opprobrious epithets. Seeing her distaste, the lady snatched away the Bath bun, and cast it with great contempt on the counter, and then ordered some ox-tail soup for Lily, but it was so hot that it burnt her mouth, and so peppery that it brought tears into her eyes, to say nothing of its being thick, and slab, and greasy; so the end of it was that the ox-tail soup shared the fate of the bun, and the lady, in a fume, pushed Lily before her into the street again.

"Intolerable little plague!" she cried, furiously. "What am I to do with you? Comport yourself sagely, or you shall be given to the black man. Entends-tu?"

A buxom mamma in flame-coloured silk and a chinchilla tippet, who was passing with five little children laughing and prattling round her in noisy glee—they had just come out of the Adelaide, and were bound for the Industrious Fleas—looked up with surprise as she heard the voice of the handsome savage woman who had dominion over Lily. Like a prudent hen, she gathered her chicks around her in a kind of nervous tremor, lest unkindness should be contagious.

"Blessings on us all!" murmured the buxom flame-coloured mamma, as Lily and her monitress went on their way, the latter scowling. "What a Fury that woman looks! How cruelly she spoke to that innocent little darling. Priscilla, my love, mind the crossing."

It was a very dangerous crossing—from the Golden Cross to Hungerford. Metropolitan improvements have since diminished its perils; but, in those days it was a fearful ford. That day there was a man run over. Lily could only hear a yell, and see the rush of people to the spot, and a rapidly formed crowd with a policeman cleaving his way through it; but when the ranks of the throng opened and they came out carrying something covered with a tarpaulin, and the jolly red face of the man—a van driver, who had unwittingly done the mischief—turn, high up on his box, a yellowish white, as the crowd cried out that somebody was killed, Lily turned quite sick with terror, and had she been old enough to swoon would have fainted on the spot. She would have run away; but the lady's grasp was tighter than ever; and the lady herself seemed grimly interested in the catastrophe. She scanned the burden they were taking to Charing-Cross Hospital; she questioned the policeman; and but for Lily's agonised entreaties that they might go away, she would have crossed the road to the scene of the accident.

They went into a hackney-coach after this; and the lady ordered the driver to proceed to Baker-street. Lily was taken to see Madame Tussaud's famous exhibition of waxwork. Old Madame Tussaud herself was alive in those days, and a very wonderful old lady Lily thought her, in her black silk bonnet and hood, handing about those inevitable bills at the door. And then was there not Mr. Cobbett, looking so remarkably like life, with his broad-brimmed hat, and his spectacles, and his placid face, and breathing hard, like a benevolent grampus? And the recumbent lady with the black lace veil, whose bosom rose and fell by clockwork? And were there not the kings and queens in velvet and sham diamonds, looking quite as brilliant as real ones? And the cavaliers in armour, and M. de Voltaire with his shrivelled face, and the old coquette in her hoop and brocade? Lily was in ecstasies, and for a time forgot about the poor man who had been run over. Here were all Mangnall's questions, answered in the most splendid manner without the trouble of learning a single lesson.

The Napoleon Museum was not then in existence; but the Chamber of Horrors was already one of the lions of London. 'Twas a strange place to take a little school-girl, out for a holiday, into; but the strange lady paid the extra sixpence—I don't know whether they admit children, now—and they went inside, and supped full of horrors. That horrible guillotine. That dismal cavern where the royal victims of revolutionary ferocity bore their captivity with such dignified resignation—in waxwork. That appalling torso in the ensanguined shirt. That gloomy dock full of murderers. Bishop and Williams were there, and Greenacre and Courvoisier; but it was too early yet for Goulds, and Hockers, and Mannings.

Lily had not been long in the Chamber of Horrors before she began to think of the man who had been run over. The air of the show seemed hot and thick. She could scarcely breathe. The glass eyes glared upon her. The

sordid garments had a musty smell. She piteously besought the strange lady to take her out, promising to be very good and quiet if she would only take her away from that dreadful place.

"You are a little fool," said the lady. "La vue de ces marauds-là m'a donné de l'appétit." And then, with a sharp "Come along," she led the way out of the Chamber of Horrors. "Now," she said, when they had entered another hackney-coach, "we are going to dinner, and mind you are very good, or the sweep shall come and eat you."

Lily was too big to believe in any apocryphal devouring propensities attributed to the harmless, albeit unwashed, individual who carries the soot-bag; but the lady was so very strange, and, at times, so very fierce-looking, that she thought it not at all improbable that she herself, failing the sweep, could have done something in the child-devouring way. So Lily bowed her head, and tried to look as good as she felt.

It was a very long way to dinner. They went through a number of brilliant crowded streets, of which she did not know the names; but they were Oxford-street, Regent-street, and the Strand. Then they walked down a narrow street on to a narrow pier by the water-side. Then a man called out "Greenwich!" and they went on board a steam-boat, where, to Lily's delight, they remained a whole hour. The ships, the wherries, the wharves, the distant steeples, the bridges, the blue dome of Paul's, the towering Monument, the grey old Tower, filled her soul with joy. She forgot how frightened she was at the strange lady. She forgot how hungry she was, and was quite happy.

"To-morrow," said the strange lady, as they landed on the pier at Greenwich, and Lily followed her to a large handsome house, "to-morrow you will go to school."

"Not to-day, ma'am?" asked the child. "What will Mrs. Bunnycastle say?"

"Mrs. Bunnycastle," returned the lady, "is a ridiculous old sheep. You are not going back to her, but to another school, where you will be taught to be very sage, and to behave yourself."

The child was amazed, and lapsed into silence.

"What are you thinking of?" the lady asked, as they ascended the steps of the large handsome house.

"I was thinking, ma'am," Lily answered, "of what a curious smell of hot fish there was, everywhere."

CHAPTER XXI. LILY IS REGALED ON WHITE-BAIT.

A BURST of laughter broke from a balcony overhead as Lily and her protectress entered the large handsome mansion; and the child, looking upward, could see a number of gentlemen congregated outside, who were leaning over the railings, and were very grandly dressed, and appeared to be enjoying themselves very much.

"By Jove!" cried one of the gentlemen—but this Lily could not hear—"she's come!"

"And brought the little one with her, too. She said she would; for propriety's sake."

"I wonder whether she will oblige us with a rapid act of horsemanship round the room, after dinner."

"It's more likely that she will fly into one of her passions, and fling the water souché, plates and all, at the waiters' heads."

"Or at us."

"I've seen her do something very nearly approaching that. Once, at the Star and Garter, she grew jealous of somebody, and tried to strangle herself with a table napkin."

"Pretty little thing, the girl."

"Her daughter, possibly. Tigresses have cubs, sometimes."

"Hush! here's the tigress herself.—Countess, how delighted we all are to see you!"

The Countess and Lily were received at the door of the mansion which smelt so strongly of warm fish, by a stout gentleman in a blue coat and buff waistcoat, whose chief aim and end in life appeared to be to show to every visitor how white, smooth, and polished, the centre of his bald head was, and how perfectly joined the sutures of his skull were. He was continually bowing at, not to, the visitors of the establishment of which he was the respected landlord—he has been dead many years, and his name, I beg to observe, was neither Hart nor Quartermaine—and he butted at you, so to speak, with his baldness, like an affable albino. The pacific nature of his mission was manifested by the snowy flag of truce which he continually waved. This flag was not precisely a napkin—that would have been too much like a waiter—nor a pocket-handkerchief—that would have been too much like a dandy—but a combination of the two: a cross between cambric and damask. But he ever waved it in peace and amity, as though to say, "Be not afeard. This is the habitation of fish and of felicity. Let no cares sit behind your chairs. I know all my customers and respect them. If you do not choose to pay the bill on the spot, you can send me down a cheque by the post, or by your body-servant at your convenience: only, don't dispute my charges, for that would hurt my feelings. This is not a vulgar cook-shop. Last week I entertained his Majesty's ministers. We don't want common people here. Let them go up the town, towards the Park, and have tea and shrimps for ninepence. Here, we desire the attendance of the superior classes only. Walk in, walk in, ladies and gentlemen. This is feeding time; and the bait is in excellent condition."

If a trader resolutely make up his mind definitively to address himself to the "superior classes," and if he carry out his intent with tact and nerve, he shall scarcely fail, I take it, to achieve success. The superior classes reward that tailor who boldly says, "Let others vaunt their sixteen-shilling garments: no puff

of mine shall ever claim insertion in the columns of the press, and I will go on charging seven pounds ten shillings for a frock-coat. There are people who like to be mulct for wax candles at an hotel, and who would think it derogatory to their dignity to pay less than seven-and-sixpence for a fried sole and a mutton-chop. Yes, there are persons who are uncomfortable unless they are overcharged. Dearness has a kind of affinity with high Toryism, and others of our glorious institutions. Cheapness is democratic; cheapness is levelling. I have always been of opinion that a daily newspaper printed on cream-laid bank post, hot pressed, gilt-edged, and sold at the rate of half-a-crown a number, would be a success. It might have but a small circulation, but it would pay, and it would be read by the superior classes by the light of three-and-sixpenny wax-candles, after seven-and-six-penny dinners, and while sipping port at fourteen shillings a bottle.

The validity or otherwise of this hypothesis is no excuse, however, for keeping a number of very hungry people waiting for their dinner. The lady passed the bald-headed landlord with a stately inclination of the head. The landlord called out in a rich, but subdued voice—a voice like iced Moselle—"Show the Benbow!" An obsequious waiter, with curved red whiskers, very like the claws of a lobster, conducted the guests up the softly carpeted staircase, and handed them over to the mistress of the robes, a buxom chambermaid.

As the lady, deftly unshawled, but still keeping on her bonnet, swept towards the Benbow, preceded by another waiter, the buxom chambermaid, who had just taken off Lily's hat, and fluttered a brush over her brown curls, stooped down and kissed the child.

"Poor little innocent darling," she whispered. "Is that your mamma, my darling?"

"I don't know," answered the child, looking up to the face of her querist with a very trustful look, for by the young woman's voice she was kind and honest.

"Poor little thing," the chambermaid continued, "what does this pet know about devilled bait? Why, they'd burn her tongue out! Don't you eat no devil, my dear."

Lily gazed at her with blank surprise. She had heard—what child has not? of the devil—and had been warned to avoid him and all his works; but she had never been counselled not to eat him.

"Nor yet don't you take no punch, nor no sauce pickang," went on the chambermaid. "There, go along, dear, your ma's calling you."

"It's a shame to bring children here," the buxom chambermaid subsequently remarked to the waiter with the lobster-claw whiskers. "It can't do 'em no good, and it's enough to ruin their little stomachs. I don't mind the Eton boys that come here with their pas, and always manage to get tipsy unbeknown, and nearly dash their young brains out a trying monkey tricks outside the balcony, and then race up and down stairs like mad. I don't mind *them*. Mischief they're born to, and mischief they're bred to. But what does that Frenchwoman want here with that little bit of a thing! I don't believe she's her ma. She's been here four or five times this season. Last time she brought an old Frenchwoman who spilt snuff into her salmon cutlets, and got tipsy half an hour before the ducks came up. My belief, William, is, that she's nothing better than a play-actress."

Another groom of the chambers threw open the Benbow, a pretty saloon overlooking the river, and announced the new arrivals.

He was a waiter with very light dun-coloured hair and a pale pasty face. He was warm in appearance, but not moist; the rather, crisp. It was scarcely an unnatural fancy to imagine that he had been fried in batter, and that, although now a waiter, he had, according to the (not then broached) Theory of Development, sprung from a whitebait.

Have you never observed how very like fish the waiters at Greenwich are? There is the John Dory waiter; the miller's thumb waiter, plump and plethoric; the whitebait waiter; the eel waiter, who wriggles very much as he waits.

A group of gentlemen advanced to meet the lady and her little client. They received her with many bows and more smiles. Lily was not at all frightened of them, for though so very grandly dressed they were all very kind and friendly to her. There was a large old gentleman with an embossed velvet waistcoat, and a great gold chain meandering over it, and a beautiful fringe of white whisker round his purple face. He had a fine hook nose, very prominent and very deeply coloured, and to Lily he looked like a splendid Punch. She had seen Punch, once or twice, by sly peeps from the windows of Rhododendron House, and had woven a child-legend about him that he and the Little Hunchback, and the porter who boxed the Barmecide's ears, were brothers. This old gentleman his companions addressed, but without much restraint, as Marquis. He had a loud voice, and often addressed the countess in that which was an unknown tongue to Lily. There were two or three gentlemen equally splendid, but younger, who were addressed indifferently as Tom, Dick, and Harry, whichever you please; and there was a spiteful-looking gentleman with very big black whiskers, which looked as though they had not been originally sable, but had acquired that hue by means of some artful pigment. This gentleman wore a high black stock, and a coat buttoned up to his chin, and his trousers were strapped very tightly over his boots: to the heels of which boots, Lily saw something long and bright attached, with a spiky star at the end of each.

Finally, there was a very tall gentleman—a painfully tall gentleman, for there seemed no end to his legs—who kept a little apart from the others, and did not laugh so loud as they did. He had a long face, very thin and pale,

and a good deal of beautiful black hair thrown back from his forehead. His hands, as Lily soon knew, were very small and thin; you could almost see through them. His clothes seemed to fit him very loosely, and when he spoke he lisped.

He was the last of the gentlemen who made friends with Lily, but she liked him the best. He drew her towards him while the men were bestowing compliments on the handsome lady, and, parting her curls, printed a very soft kiss on her forehead. Not one of the other gentlemen had done that. Had they touched her, Lily would have blushed, and her little temper would have risen, and she would have cried "Don't." But she did not reject the thin pale gentleman.

"And so your mamma has brought you to dine with us, little one," he said, looking in her clear eyes.

The handsome lady was her mamma. This was news to Lily. She did not reply directly to his question, but began to chatter on what a pretty place it was, and how beautiful all that glass looked on the table.

"Ay, ay," returned the pale tall gentleman, nodding his head, "there are plenty of pretty things here, and prettier things to put into them. Are you fond of pretty things?"

"Oh! I love them so dearly," the child cried, joining her small palms together. And then she began to tell him about the spider on the wall, and a squirrel that belonged to Miss Furblow, and Miss Dallwallah's golden earrings, and a great doll with a blue satin frock and pink shoes and a sash, which Miss Babby had once shown her, and which had belonged to Miss Kneecrops, the poor girl who died before Lily came to school.

"You are a strange child," the tall gentleman said. "What's your name?"

"Lily Floris."

"The rose by any other name would smell as sweet. And how old are you, dear?"

"Nearly eight," quoth Lily; "and what's your name, sir?"

"Tom Jones," replied the gentleman.

"No it isn't," pursued Lily, shaking her head; "it's something much prettier than that. Do tell me, or I won't talk to you any more."

"Well," replied the gentleman, smiling, "my name's Long."

"Long what?"

"You little inquisitor! My christian name is William, and people call me Sir William Long. At school, they used to nickname me Long Billy."

"And how old are you? I should so like to know?"

"I am twenty-eight."

"Then you're just twenty years older than I am. How nice! Are you married?"

"No," gravely answered the tall gentleman who said his name was Sir William Long. "I am Quite Alone."

"And so am I," quoth Lily, laughing. "All the girls told me so. I have always been Quite Alone till to-day. May I sit with you at dinner?"

Sir William was about to give a smiling affirmative to the naïve question, when the countess—the handsome lady—who had been watching this little by-play from afar off, addressed the tall gentleman by the name of Good-for-nothing, and asked him how long he intended to keep them waiting?

"I have been flirting with your little girl," he said, as he placed the child beside him.

Lily did not know anything about flirting; but she knew the tall gentleman had been very kind to her, and she liked very much to sit near him.

"Flirting!" exclaimed the countess, scornfully. "You begin early."

"You had better teach the little one her A B C: she scarcely knows it."

"She'll get on fast enough if you take her away from school and teach her yourself," the old gentleman, who was a marquis, remarked, with a bow.

"When I want her to learn wickedness she shall come to you," retorted the lady. "Please to give me some souché, and, Sir William, I entreat you not to let that unhappy child eat too much."

The lady brightened up more and more after each course, and when the sparkling wines were passed about, was quite radiant.

"I like this Greenwich," she said, holding a brimming glass of Moselle to the light; "it does me good. It makes me breathe. Give me Greenwich and Richmond, and you may sink the rest of your sad England to the bottom of your muddy Thames. How good these little fishes are! How crisp they eat! Good-for-nothings, I drink to you." The lady was enjoying herself.

The dinner was a very grand one; but, with all its grandeur, piscine culinary art has progressed since those days, and by the side of a Greenwich banquet as we now understand it, the repast might have seemed mean. Still, there was an almost inconceivable variety of fish. Still, rare wines came up with every course. The glass and damask would have appeared paltry in comparison with the sumptuosities of crystal and napery which are now displayed at such feasts, but it was a dinner fit for a king, and one Lily settled in her own mind of the precise description partaken of every day by the Caliph Haroun Alraschid. She fancied Giaffar calling for more salmon cutlets, and eating a devilled bait with his fingers. And then, the bait themselves became the fish that turned in the pan and reproached the cook in the Fisherman and the Geni. And the pasty-faced waiters were black slaves with jewelled collars and armlets, and the rare wines were sherbet cooled with snow, and the child ate her dinner in a dream.

Sir William Long was faithful to his trust, and took the most sedulous care of her. He gave her some nice fried sole, and warned off the waiters who would have approached her

with perilous preparations of salmon and stewed eels. He bade the man bring him some Seltzer-water, and gave Lily a modest glass of the beverage mingled with champagne. He gave her some whitebait, which, with the thin brown bread-and-butter, she thought delicious, but he made her eschew the condimental cayenne pepper and lemon. He watched over her with a careful tenderness, very curious to behold, and, though he drank fearfully long draughts of the rare wines, he took little more solid food than Lily herself.

"You must be very thirsty!" the child said, simply, as he drained another bumper of claret-cup.

"I am always thirsty."

"How funny! Why don't you drink tea, or go to the pump?—unless, of course, you are hot. Miss Babby will never let us go to the pump when we are hot. Miss Furblow begged a jug of water from the cook once, when we had come in from a long walk, and broke out, two hours afterwards, in a—O so dreadful rash. Mrs. Bunnycastle said it was a judgment upon her."

"I dare say it was. My being always thirsty is a judgment, I suppose, on me. I drink because I am alone, and because I am ill."

"Ill! You look very well, only you are so tall. Have you got a cold?"

"Much worse than that. I am in a consumption."

"What is that? I never heard of that."

"Fancy, for aught I know," the tall gentleman replied.

"What do you do all day? Have you any holidays?"

"A great deal too many, my darling. It is always holiday-time with me, and a dreadfully dreary time it is."

"Then you don't learn any lessons?"

"I have learnt some that have cost me very dear."

"Are you good?"

"Not the least bit in the world, dear; I am very bad."

"How dreadful. Everybody ought to be good. Miss Babby says so."

"And who is Miss Babby?"

"One of my governesses. The one who is so kind to me. You ought to be good, you know, because then the angels will love you. We had a missionary-box at our school. Have you got a missionary-box?"

"I'm afraid I haven't got such a thing."

"But you go to church?"

"I am ashamed to say I don't. Do you?"

"Yes; but only this last half. I am growing a great girl, you know," and Lily drew herself up proudly. "And then all the big girls begged for me, and promised Miss Babby that I should be very good and quiet."

"And you like going to church?"

"Oh! it's so nice. They sing so beautifully. But I don't like the Litany, it is so long, and always the same thing."

"And the sermon?"

Lily blushed. "Miss Babby scolded me for going to sleep all through the sermon. Miss Heavylids was kept in for sleeping, too. Miss Browncett was punished for reading a story-book in church-time. Were you ever punished?"

"I punish myself at present. The rest is all to come. But at last this long-winded dinner is over. Here is dessert. Will you let me peel you an apple? A nice red, juicy apple, Lily?"

"If you please," said the child. "I like to be called Lily."

She watched with much amused curiosity the process of peeling a ribstone pippin. Sir William accomplished the task very deftly, and having removed the peel in one long spiral, threw it over his shoulder upon the carpet.

"There," he cried, "the letter the peel will form, will be the initial of your sweetheart's name. Let's look at it. Why, it's a W!"

"And W stands for William," exclaimed Lily, in an ecstasy. "How nice. And will you be my sweetheart?"

"Of course, if we ever see one another again. Countess," he continued, "we have been trying the Sortes Virgilianæ, and Fate declares that I am to be your little girl's sweetheart."

"'Sortes! Virgile!' Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça?" replied the lady addressed. "I don't know what you are talking about. Est-ce que vous radotez, mon garçon?"

"We hadn't a copy of Virgil, so we tried an apple. The peel came down in a W."

"Absurdity!" cried the lady. "What nonsense to put into the child's head."

To the most magnificent feast there must be a termination, and at last the Greenwich dinner came to an end. It had been a very merry dinner indeed, and the two quietest guests were Lily and Sir William Long. It had been a very merry dinner, and when the cloth was removed, and more wines—red wines—were brought on, it became quite an uproarious dinner. After a time, one of the gentlemen rose and proposed the health of their charming guest, the countess, in a speech which was very eloquent, and very full of compliments, and which was received with thunders of applause; but in which there was faint suspicion (I am inclined to think) of the speaker making fun of the countess. The audience, however, laughed and cheered tremendously, and in the midst of the oration, and the thumpings on the table, and the clattering of the plates, and the clinking of the glasses, Sir William Long stole away quietly with Lily into the balcony.

He bade her look out on the river, so calm and glassy, and the great ships with their dusky hulls lying so tranquil, and the cottages with curling smoke, and the cows and horses in the meadows opposite. They looked for a time quite silently at the glories of the setting sun. The child was glad to be away from the hot room, and the fumes of the wine, the riotous noise, and the strange wild company. She

nestled close to the tall gentleman, and looked up in his face lovingly.

"Are you happy, dear?" he said, smoothing her curls again.

"I should be, if I was going back to school; but the lady says that I am to be taken away from Mrs. Bunnycastle's and sent to another school. Perhaps they will be unkind to me there. Oh! I do wish I was going back to Miss Babby."

Sir William muttered something. Lily could not gather its entire purport, but she thought she heard him say that he was a fool, and that it was no concern of his. And then he turned towards her, and asked her in a strange voice if she liked him.

"Of course I do," the child answered, readily. "Lily always loves the people who have been kind to her. I should like to be your little wife, and make you a pair of nice red muffatees for the winter. I should like to go to the wax-work show every day—but not into that dreadful room where the naughty men are—and I should like you to be very good, and take me to church every Sunday, and always give sixpence to the poor old blind man with one leg, who now stands at the corner by our school. Miss Babby says he was at the battle of Waterloo, and was very brave there, only they won't give him a pension because he is fond of rum, and beats his wife."

This rambling prattle was interrupted by the countess, who came abruptly into the balcony, and demanded whether Sir William Long intended to elope with the little one, and what he meant by keeping her out there in the chilly night air?

"The chilly night air is better," the baronet—for such was his title—replied, "than that noisy oven inside. However, your little girl has made me quite meek and obedient, and we will go in if you wish it. How long do you intend to remain, countess?"

"Are you tired of my company? It is true that you have not condescended to bestow much of it upon *me* to-night. Are you fascinated with la petite?"

"A very harmless fascination, I humbly think. I wish I had known no worse."

"Ah! vous en avez fait des belles! Upon my word, you have been a most gallant cavalier—to a baby."

"I have done my duty by the baby, and my best to preserve her from bogies and vampires."

"You are an excellent nurse."

"I have tried to prevent her wanting any pills or powders to-morrow."

"*You* will want brandy and soda-water to-morrow, as you always do. There, let her go with the chambermaid, and get ready to go home. We return to town to-night, and we have a long journey to make to-morrow."

"What are you going to do with her, countess?" asked Sir William Long, when the chambermaid, notwithstanding an unanimous protest against the lady's threatened departure, had been rung for, and conducted the child to her robing-room.

"C'est mon affaire. She belongs to me. Do I ask you where you spend your evenings, or what you do with the things that belong to you?"

"Heaven knows, I should be able to give you but sorry answers, if you did. I am sick of my life."

"Why don't you marry?"

"You have tried it. How did you like it?"

The countess shrugged her shoulders. "It is different," she said. "I am not a man; I only wish I were one. Mon mari était un lâche—un misérable."

"Countess."

"Well, Sir William."

"I think there are few things you would hesitate about selling."

"Well, I am not particular. I like money; it buys so many things, and enables one to mock one's self of the world. Well, what then?"

"I wish you would consent to sell me your little girl."

"To put her in a cabinet among the china and the pictures that you give such mad prices for? Thank you."

"I will give you a cheque for a thousand pounds and my bay mare, Sontag."

"What would you do with her?"

"By Heaven's help, I would endeavour to save her from perdition."

"Whither I, her guardian and protectress, am leading her. I am very much obliged to you, Sir William Long, but you are not rich enough to buy her. Nor yet is M. de Rothschild. I bought her, voyez-vous, or I stole her, whichever you please. She represents to me success, triumph, vengeance. By having her to do what I like with, I win a bet ten times greater than all you ever had in one of those little books English gentlemen ruin themselves over—a bet I made to myself seven years ago. I have won it, and I have the honour to wish you a very good evening."

She went into the dining-room, Sir William following her sadly. She contemptuously resisted all entreaties to stay, to take coffee, to try one little cigarette. She bade her "charming Good-for-nothings" a scornful farewell, and bestowed on them, at parting, a blessing that sounded curiously like a curse. Then she went and robed herself, and flinging the chambermaid a crown piece which that buxom servitor felt much inclined to fling back again, she led the child, who was beginning to feel sleepy, although it was scarcely yet dark, down stairs.

The affable landlord once more butted at her with his bald head, when Sir William Long, who had quietly followed, made his appearance.

"I must bid my little pet good night," he said, taking both the child's hands in his. "May I kiss her, countess?"

"Yes; but don't slip a sovereign into her

hand. I saw you take one out of your waistcoat-pocket."

Sir William bit his lip. "It was not a sovereign," he was beginning to say, but he stopped himself prudently. "Keep that," he whispered, as he stooped down and pressed Lily's forehead with his lips. "Don't lose it; keep it in remembrance of the man with the tall face and the long legs you met at Greenwich. Keep it, and don't, on any account, let your mamma see it."

"Good-by, sir," said Lily, grasping something hard and smooth that he had given her.

"God bless you!" returned the baronet. "I heartily wish you were my little sister or my daughter."

The landlord and the waiters were obsequiously anxious to know whether the lady had a carriage, or whether they should procure a carriage for her. She had not the one, and did not require the other, she said. She felt hot, and intended to take a walk, and then engage a fly for her conveyance to London.

"I have my drag here," said Sir William; "I can drive you to town in it, if you like."

"You are wanted up-stairs. On vous demande là-haut," the countess returned. "The Good-for-nothings are clamorous for you back again. Go away. Adieu." And she swept off.

But Sir William Long did not rejoin the choice knot of boon companions in the dining-saloon. He lighted a cigar, and ordered his drag to be brought round. By-and-by, came up a stately four-in-hand, with two grooms, the horses champing. He mounted the box, covered himself up with coats and rugs, and, amidst a tempest of bows from the assembled waiters, drove moodily back to town, smoking all the way.

Sir William Long was one of the wildest young men in London. He was immensely rich, and his prodigality, reckless as it was, could scarcely keep pace with his revenues. That evening, however, he felt very little inclined for prodigality. He did not go to Gamridge's. He forbore to look in at Crockford's. He went nowhere in the direction of such places. He drove straight to Pall Mall, and went up-stairs to some chambers he had there, where he drank soda-water, and smoked, and read Robinson Crusoe till two in the morning. And, when he went to bed, he had confused dreams of being married, and sitting in a garden with children about his knee. And all the children were like Lily.

"Poor little creature!" he murmured, turning on his pillow, next morning. "What a life there lies before her! What does that monstrous woman intend to do with the child? To make her a rope-dancer, or a horse-rider, or what?"

"The governor's hipped, that's sure," Mr. Vernish, Sir William's valet, observed that day to Mrs. Springbone, the lady who officiated as housekeeper at the chambers, 290, Pall Mall. "He wouldn't have no brandy-and-soda this morning; he wouldn't have no devilled kidneys, and no anchovy toast. He breakfasted on a cup of tea and a roll, and he set off for a walk by hisself in the Green Park. I think he's in love."

"By Jove! I *will* get married," cried William Long to himself that very morning. "I'll go to Peignoir's and have my hair cut, and I'll call on the Cœurdesarts."

The which he did, punctually.

MORE TRIFLES FROM CEYLON.

The lovely harbour of Trincomalie, one of the most beautiful spots in this beautiful island, is, at certain seasons of the year, illuminated during the night by hundreds of floating lights moving hither and thither. Then the bay is full of cuttle-fish—the fish which produces sepia—and the lights are employed by the fishermen to attract them. The method of catching them is simple in the extreme. The boatman fastens a dead cuttle-fish to a piece of string, and lets it down over the side of his boat. From time to time he hauls it in, when one or more cannibal cuttle-fish are found busily feeding on their companion. When thus removed from their native element and thrown into the canoe, they utter a kind of squeal, and often emit the sepia; and, as they die, a phosphoric kind of halo surrounds them.

At about the time when the cuttle-fish are in season, the harbour is also full of what are there called blubber-fish, or jelly-fish. They are so close together in the water as to impede the progress of a boat. Quantities are left on shore by the tide, where they decompose, to the great annoyance of those who live near the beach. During the time they lie there, silver has been known to turn black in the houses.

Towards evening, as we sit on the green before our house, the flying-foxes come sailing heavily overhead, on their way to their feeding-places; next morning they return to their resting-place, where they hang from the branches of the trees, screaming, and apparently abusing those who intrude upon their solitudes. I saw a number of them thus congregated this very morning, while I was shooting snipe, and I might have killed several; but although their flesh is said to be very tender, I have never been up to trying it; and to have killed them, therefore, would have been wanton cruelty. I hold, with the Ancient Mariner, that

> He prayeth well who loveth well,
> Both man, and bird, and beast;
> He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things, both great and small;
> For the dear God who loveth us,
> He made, and loveth all.

Where tough beef and skinny fowls are the usual, and often the only, supplies procurable in the market, a snipe, or a teal, or a hare, or a jungle-cock, is a valuable addition to one's larder; and after several days' hard work, a couple of hours' shooting on a Saturday, affords the ci-

vilian, at a lonely out-station, almost the only means of exercise and recreation to be had.

When a man looks about him with a purpose, it is remarkable how many different animals he may see any day of his life peculiar to the country in which he lives. Let me take to-day. I have mentioned the flying-fox. Starting for a short drive in the afternoon with some children, one of the children all but treads on a small snake before she reaches the carriage. Within a mile of the house, we see an iguano by the road-side, which I touch with my whip as we pass; a little further on, a large Kabere-goya, leisurely crossing the road, can scarcely be induced to wait until the carriage has passed, and almost walks under the wheels. The iguano is a lizard about three feet long, with a forked snake-like tongue, and a shagreen looking skin, of a dark slate colour. It makes very good soup. A gentleman recently told me that one of his children was suffering from atrophy, and that it derived the most marked benefit from eating this nutritious food. The Kabere-goya is a much larger lizard than the iguano, and has yellow marks upon a skin, the ground colour of which is also slate. The Kabere-goya, is a more unclean animal than the iguano, and is not eaten. It grows to the length of about six, and even eight feet, and takes readily to the water. I often meet it about the swampy fields, or in ditches by the wayside. It is slow in its movements, generally, and about this place does not seem to fear man much. When it thinks it is going to be molested, it swells out the pouch under its throat, and makes an angry noise, like a snake, though louder. I have been told that it has been known to carry off young children. The first time I learnt this, was during an examination in the Singhalese language, and my informant was a Singhalese gentleman, who was one of the examiners. He informed me of it in the vernacular, during the colloquial part of the examination, and as I had not the slightest desire to prolong it, I did not pursue the subject. I have since heard from another source that this huge lizard has carried off children, and I see no reason to doubt it; for its strength and its capacity for swallowing, are great. I recently buried one in order to exhume its skeleton, when the ants and other animals shall have picked the bones clean.

Almost everybody has heard how a gentleman in India sent to England a faithful picture of some scene in the land of his sojourn; how the drawing in due course of time found its way into an illustrated newspaper; how mortified he was to see groups of cocoa-nut-trees sprinkled here and there, where never a cocoa-tree should be, seeing that none ever could or would grow in that region; and how, in reply to his remonstrances, he was told that "the British public *demanded* palm-trees" in an Oriental picture.

I labour under the painful conviction that the British public demands elephants in an account of Ceylon, and how to meet this demand in a satisfactory manner is my difficulty; for, in the first place, Sir Emerson Tennent has already given a full and accurate description of the habits and formation of this animal; and, in the second place, not only do I disclaim any pretension to be an elephant shot, but—shall I confess it?—I have never, during a residence of eighteen years in this island, succeeded in meeting a wild elephant face to face. Here is a position for a man to be in who professes to write about elephants! Should any one ask where I have been, where I ought to have seen them, I reply, I have travelled from the northernmost point of the island, which is Point Pedro, to the most southern, which is Dondera Head. I have performed part of that journey along the central road between Elephant Pass and Kandy, in the days when that road was so little frequented that you might go to any man's straw-rick and pull out as much straw as you required for your cattle without asking leave or making payment, and when not to meet an elephant on the journey was a thing to be wondered at. I have travelled from Colombo, on the west coast, to Batticaloa, on the east, passing through the country of the Veddahs, the wild men of Ceylon, where elephants are known to abound. Through this region I passed with children and a lady. The heat by day was so fearful that we lay panting beneath the shade of the trees, of huts made of boughs, or of a tent, for houses there were none, and at night we proceeded on our journey through the forests. On these occasions it was necessary for me always to ride in advance with gun in hand, for the palanquin-bearers almost invariably throw down their burdens and take to their heels at the sight of an elephant. I have made various journeys through the lower divisions of the Badulla district, where Major Rogers shot so many elephants, travelling by moonlight through places where their marks were to be seen on every side. I have ridden from Trincomalie to Jaffna by the coast road, and I walked, not long ago, from Bomparipo to Marichikatte, near Aripo, sleeping in the very heart of the forest until two in the morning, and then pursuing my way by moonlight until day-break, and seeing the fresh marks of an elephant who had preceded me but a short while before.

In the present day, not only has the number of elephants in the island greatly decreased, but the number of amateur hunters has diminished also. Planters are no longer roused, as in times gone by, by hearing the elephants pulling the thatch out of the roofs of their frail bungalows amidst the unfelled forest. Now, the difficulty often is to discern a patch of forest from the verandah of the planter's shingled and cozy cottage; far as the eye can reach all is coffee, and soon firewood will be a commodity to be brought from afar; nay, if I am not mistaken, this difficulty already exists in some localities.

The elephants have retired further away into places where the hills have never yet resounded to the sound of the axe or the crash of falling timber, and where they can disport themselves at will in the ruined tanks erected in bygone

ages by the former monarchs of the island. But here even they are not secure. Sportsmen more keen, and less occupied than Europeans generally are, seek them in their remotest haunts. Until recently, government paid a reward for every elephant's tail produced at the offices of the various government agents, and the Moor men and Singhalese catch many annually for export. A great many of the able-bodied villagers, moreover, have now guns and ammunition, so it is not to be wondered at that the elephant is not so common as in the days I allude to.

Floating hazily among the annals of Ceylon are many tales of moving accidents and hair-breadth escapes of these sportsmen of a bygone day. It is not easy now either to connect these stories with any particular individual, or to be sure that the legends are correct in all their details, still they always seem to interest the new arrival, and may, possibly, serve the same purpose with others far distant. I was reminded lately of one of these stories. A gentleman fired at an elephant but did not succeed in killing him, and the infuriated beast charged him, and compelled him to seek safety in flight. A tree was in view, and for this he made with all speed, closely pursued. Already had he reached a branch some height from the ground, when, to his horror, he felt the trunk of the elephant seizing him round the leg; he gave himself up for lost, but instinctively drew his leg away, and, to his surprise, he found that the effort was successful—the *leg* was saved, but the boot was left behind! The elephant's trunk had done the part of a boot-jack, and the man escaped scathless.

The sense of smell is very powerful in the elephant, and compensates, to a great extent, for the limited range of its vision. A friend of mine told me, that in the earlier days of his residence in the island, when he and his brother were exceedingly keen in the pursuit of sport, they came across an elephant in the mountain forests while armed only with their fowling-pieces. If I mistake not, one barrel of each gun was loaded with ball, and one with shot, a practice by no means uncommon, when it is uncertain whether the game will be a jungle-fowl or an elephant. At any rate, they attacked the elephant, and were reduced to the necessity of discharging the shot barrels also at him, whereby they succeeded in blinding him. They were then compelled to take to their heels, and, being both light, active young men, they contrived to dodge him, and to get out of the forest into the open patenas. There they halted, and were standing by each other, when they saw the elephant emerge from the forest with his trunk to the ground, and regularly track the course they had taken by smelling their footsteps as a hound would do. Deprived of the power of sight, he brought that of scent to his aid, in order to obtain his revenge. I fancy they did not wait long to see what would be the result. One of these gentlemen has had several narrow escapes in the forests, both from elephants and other animals; one most terrible tussle with a bear will be told of under the proper head.

It is, however, not very long since that he and a friend at Batticaloa tracked a couple of elephants into a very nasty thorny jungle. The elephants are perfectly aware of their advantage over the foe in such places, where escape for the biped is very difficult, and are, therefore, all the more likely to charge him under such circumstances. Each of them selected an elephant and fired. The one that my friend M—— fired at ran off; the one at which his companion fired charged. On their turning to recover the spare guns from the natives, the sportsmen found that they had bolted, and there was nothing for it but to run.

But in the thorny jungle this was not easy, and looking round, my friend perceived that the elephant had seized his companion, and was mauling him in a most terrible manner. Unarmed as he was, it was not easy to know what to do; he, however, adopted the only course open to him: he turned back, made a noise to attract the elephant's notice, and provoked him to quit his first victim, and to endeavour in him to find a fresh one. He then dodged the elephant the best way he could, made a circuit to where his companion lay, and succeeded in getting him into the open ground, but so vindictive was their foe, that they several times were in danger of a fresh attack, and could hear him crashing about in the jungle.

The injuries received by the wounded gentleman were very severe; his shoulder-bone was broken, and he had many other painful contusions and wounds. The wonder is that he escaped alive. It was long before they could find their scattered attendants; the recovery of the guns they had dropped in the jungle was a work of difficulty and danger, and altogether this affair was an exceedingly awkward and unpleasant one. On their way back to Batticaloa, while crossing the lake in a boat, one of their guns was accidentally discharged by the carelessness of an attendant, and the contents were lodged in a man's leg. This story was told me in his quiet way by my friend during a little excursion into the jungle, and although I cannot be sure of every minute particular, I believe I have correctly related the main points.

An adventure of a more ludicrous character not long since befel two other friends of mine. One of them was a gentleman who had come to Ceylon to visit some property of his, and to have a little shooting. He contemplated remaining only a few months, and I remember his saying, as we drove to his estate the first day of his arrival in the district, that before leaving it he must kill an elephant, a bear, a cheetah, a buffalo, a wild pig, and an alligator. We gave him the opportunity of killing several of the last the very next morning; with the others he was less successful. One day he and another gentleman, not a sportsman, were out after deer, when they unexpectedly found themselves among a herd of elephants. The Coolies bolted with the guns, the non-combative gentleman ran up to his neck into a lake, and the visitor from England had the mortification of seeing the herd

disperse without getting a shot; nor did he have another chance before his departure from the island.

The peninsula of Jaffna is separated from the rest of the island (save at one spot, where a narrow strip of land connects the two) by a shallow inlet of the sea. Among other fords, there is one called Elephant Pass, where the Dutch built a little redoubt in the olden times. Many pleasant reminiscences cling around this little fort. It stands alone on a plain interspersed with clumps of jungle—the haunts of deer, hares, partridges, and jungle-fowl. On the lakes, and tanks, and lagoons, to be seen from the windows over the ramparts, are, at certain seasons, teal, wild ducks, pelicans, spoonbills, flamingoes, and other aquatic birds, and also numbers of crocodiles. In former times, the elephants used periodically to cross the ford at this spot, and visit the peninsula, at the season when the tempting fruit of the palmyra palm promised them a grateful repast; but, of late years, the extension of cultivation in the vicinity, and the various other causes which have tended to diminish the number of elephants generally, have influenced their visits to this locality. Nevertheless, the last time I was there, a tusker was reported to be in the neighbourhood, and his fresh marks were all around. I have often heard an old resident tell how, one fine morning, it was reported to him that there were a couple of elephants in the town of Jaffna. One of them chose to take his course down the main street, to the great terror of the inhabitants. In the course of his peregrinations he upset an old woman, but did her no further injury. Being pursued by a couple of sportsmen, he tried to re-cross the lake near the custom-house, but one of his pursuers took boat and killed him in the water.

Till within a few years a reward was paid by government, as before said, for elephants' tails produced at a government agent's office. The hope of reward stimulated many natives to engage in the destruction of elephants; but as they were intent only on securing the tail, it often happened that, after their depriving the animal of its caudal extremity, it would get up again and run off. It therefore became customary to demand the production of part of the trunk also.

The Malays in the neighbourhood of Hanabaratotte are said to be exceedingly daring huntsmen. They will go behind an elephant and give him a slap or pull his tail, and as he turns round they fire at him behind the ear, and bring him down by a single ball.

Sir Emerson Tennent has graphically and faithfully described the mode in which elephants are captured in Ceylon by erecting a strong enclosure, called a kraal, into which the elephants are carefully driven. The word kraal is one in common use in the island, to denote any enclosure. The fishermen call those fish-traps which they make in the rivers and lakes by the same name, and it is the general term among the farmers of South Africa for their sheep-pens. The word is a Dutch one, and, like many other Dutch words, has been adopted by the Singhalese. The last elephant kraal was in the Koruegalle district. It took place in the month of August last, and I am indebted to a local newspaper, the Ceylon Times, for the following account of the capture:

"After twenty-four hours of intense suspense, the alarm was given by loud shouts from all sides that the animals were entering the kraal, and of course a general rush took place in order to secure a good view of the proceedings. Each vied with the other in endeavouring to obtain the most prominent place. Trees were the resorts of hundreds, and the strong wooden palisading was resorted to by crowds eager to obtain a good view of the 'take.' First, a pair of elephants, wearied and worn with driving and heat, made their appearance. Whether the noise or the sight of the eager spectators in the trees alarmed the huge creatures, I know not, but it is certain that the companions of the first pair changed their minds, if elephants have any minds, and no more entered the enclosure at the time. The next batch that was entrapped was a nice little lot of fifteen, and these were made up to forty, and afterwards to forty-four on the next day. The poor brutes came in very much subdued—not with the savage ferocity I had been led to expect. There was no wild trumpeting—no mad onslaughts on the palisades—no charging the guards as one reads of in books. The weather had been oppressively hot for some time; the brooks were all dried up, and the thirsty creatures, when they reached the entrance to the kraal, were as completely used up as though they had been hunted down for a month.

"It was nevertheless a striking scene that 'drive in.' What with the motley crowds on every possible eminence, the long array of guards with white wands, the huge brutes within the fence, the stately forest trees, and the bright moon shining high above us, the effect was such as I shall not easily forget.

"But grander still was the scene when, on a given signal, a hundred fires shot their bright flames flickering through the dense depths of the surrounding forest, and for a time seemed to pale the soft light of the moon. It was a novel sight to most of us, and for hours we remained there, riveted to the spot by the wild enchantment of the scene.

"Two only of the elephants were shot, being unruly; the rest were quietly and cautiously proceeded with in the usual fashion, a number of decoy elephants being introduced within the kraal for that purpose. There was a small pool of water within the enclosure, once no doubt a tank of some extent, but now dried up by the hot weather. To this the thirsty animals made a rush in a body as soon as it was perceived; their eagerness, however, defeated their object, for no sooner had their huge feet entered the pool than it became a mass of mud trampled into the veriest puddle.

"In spite of the exhausted condition of the animals there was some difficulty in noosing them, which was a work of time. They were eventually secured and marched off, each one

between two tame animals, to the adjacent river, where they drank as only elephants can after nearly a week of fasting.

"Thus terminated the most successful, if not the most exciting, kraal known for many years. Rapidly the gathering dispersed: horses, nags, tats, and bullocks, were all once more in requisition, and soon the dusty road was covered with vehicles of every conceivable description, wending their way homewards."

It may be added, that a series of stereoscopic photographs of the kraal were executed by a professional photographer in the island.

HOW KING CHARLES'S HEAD WAS LOOSENED.

When Charles the First came to the throne, somebody prayed that his head might be set in the right direction, for if he made a false start there would be no turning him from it. As this was said by a friend of Divine Right in Kings, we may be permitted humbly to take up his parable, and so, comparing Sacred Majesty to a nag, go on to remember how Charles the First, when first harnessed to the gig of the constitution, was trotted out upon the king's highway by the handsome George Villiers, alias Duke of Buckingham, who had been groom to his sire; and how this groom, having him by the ear, turned him with his head looking down the road when it ought to have looked up the road, and still holding him by the ear, ran by his side while he trotted him off the way he shouldn't go. Old Parliament, who drove then and still drives the national gig, did his best to whip off that impudent groom, and gave the nag a flip or two, to make him shake his ears free of the fellow. The groom ran until he dropped, and the horse that still wouldn't be turned steadily galloped headlong down the road instead of up the road, running the gig against every post, tumbling one wheel or both wheels into every ditch, viciously hoping to pitch old Parliament out, and leave him behind to die of a cracked crown. But the old driver kept his crown uncracked, and the obstinate nag that wouldn't turn, had his head pulled at until it became so loose that a little more would pull it off. And so at last it *was* pulled off; only in time to save the gig and its driver from destruction.

Now, if we would know all the history of the false start that ended in this tragedy of the nag's head; if we would actually see George Villiers running at the horse's ears, with old Parliament firm in his seat, laying his whip over the impudent groom's shoulder; if we stand at our windows to note how the mulish animal still rears and plunges upon its false course after that unhappy man has dropped down dead and been run over by the gig-wheel; let us read the book that every one who cares about the history of English liberty and right is now reading: Mr. Forster's Life of Sir John Eliot. For, the spirit of the English parliament was personified in Sir John Eliot during those first days and years which determined issues that were, of all great issues affecting the welfare of this country, the most momentous. And of all that Sir John Eliot and the parliament whereof he was the right hand, did, while the head that disdained the curb was loosening, Mr. Forster, by help partly of a large mass of Eliot's own papers, which are the precious heirlooms of his descendants, and partly by help of unwearied research among other unpublished documents in the State Paper Office and elsewhere, and chiefly by help of his own clear judgment and quick wit, gives for the first time full and exact account. We take leave to say that as Eliot was born for his work, so Mr. Forster was born for the recording of Eliot's work. Nothing but a perception of the spirit of that time, perfectly wonderful in its original distinctness, and sharpened to the utmost by study and ripe sympathy, could have produced this book out of fifty-fold the materials at Mr. Forster's command. The old life stirs again in his pages. From the other side of two centuries, the voices of the patriots come to us no longer as from the other side of a dead wall, with muffled sound of which we can make out only here and there the sense; but they are clear and familiar as the voices of the kindred who are sitting by our own hearth; the old debates of Charles's parliaments being, in fact, made as fresh to us as the debates in to-day's newspaper —and a good deal more interesting.

Eliot himself put thus into a formula, the whole tragedy of Charles's reign; it was: "To make the men most obnoxious most secure, and those that were most hateful to the public to be most honoured and esteemed." Eliot's biographer, in speaking of the precedents drawn from the reign of Elizabeth, for injustice in the reign of Charles the First, points out that the queen, to whose reign the parliament always referred as to a time of greatness past, made no secret of her mistakes, but showed a prompt redress of them. "This," he says, "is what *her* example should have taught a court which unhappily was incapable of learning anything. She understood, if ever a ruler did, the art in which the highest government consists, of so conforming to the veracities and necessities around it, as to make itself really the expression of the people governed, in their changing condition, in their new and impatient wants, in their increasing intelligence. But Charles the First had no one to tell him this, nor probably would have listened if there had been. The people around him could only see that he was not as brave as the great queen, and lament that he should rather have taken example by his father. But it would have been well for him if he had done even this. He suffered for want of his father's cowardice, quite as much as for want of Elizabeth's courage. His was one of those natures, not uncommon, which having no real self-reliance have yet a most intense self-reference, and make up ever for yielding in some point by obstinacy in some other; and it was his misery always to resist, as he yielded, too late. After giving up everything that had sustained the

prerogative while it had yet any work in the world to do, he believed in it to the last as the only thing that could help him; and he was not the less ready to seize Pym and Hampden in 1641 because of his defeat and discomfiture in the attempt to seize Eliot in 1626."

Peter Heylin said of the line taken by the king, that all his gains and gettings by it might have been "put in a seamstress's thimble, and yet never fill it." The story of John Eliot will show why this was so.

He was a Cornishman born, and an esquire's son of old Devonshire descent. His great-uncle had, by exchange of properties, become possessed of the Priory of St. Germans, on a branch of the Plymouth estuary, and called the place, according to Cornish custom, from its situation by the water-side, Port Eliot. Port Eliot is still the seat of Eliot's descendant; the Earl of St. Germans.

At Port Eliot then, in the great house, by a poor fishing village irregularly built on an uneven rock, John Eliot was born on the twentieth of April, two hundred and seventy-four years ago. His easy hospitable father died when the son was a gentleman commoner of Exeter College, Oxford, and nineteen years old. Thus, therefore, John Eliot in earliest manhood came into his inheritance, and was at once, upon his coming of age, the representative of an important county family.

He left the university about a year after his father's death, and studied law for a short time at one of the inns of court—some knowledge of the laws of his country being then considered a necessary part of the education of any gentleman, a part of whose share in the business of life it would be to help to administer, maintain, or amend, them. Then young Mr. Eliot went abroad—as it also became every well-educated gentleman then to do in his youth; and in the course of his journey he fell in with young George Villiers, who was by two years and four months Eliot's junior, and journeyed in friendly company with him to several places.

George Villiers was the younger son of Sir George Villiers, of Leicestershire, and of the beautiful and clever kitchen-maid whom Sir George took for his second wife. The ex-kitchen maid, as Lady Villiers, proved her cleverness. Her husband's family estates went, on his death, about this time, to his heir by the previous marriage, and it depended on her wit to make provision for her son George (who was surpassingly handsome), and her other children. George, therefore, had been sent abroad to perfect himself, by three years of travel, in French, horsemanship, fencing, and dancing. Meanwhile, his mother at home married again, and through a third husband, Sir Thomas Compton, whom she afterwards deserted, she found means to push the fortunes of her children.

Young Mr. Eliot, having returned to Cornwall, at once married and settled down as a discreet, though very earnest and warm-hearted, country gentleman; he married at the age of twenty-one, Miss Rhadagund Gedie, daughter of a wealthy Cornish squire. His eldest son was born to him in the course of the next year and very soon afterwards, in his twenty-fourth year, he entered parliament as member for the borough of St. Germans, with which town, as we have seen, his estate of Port Eliot was immediately connected. It was the same second parliament of James the First in which Pym entered on his political life, and Bacon ended his career as people's representative. There were many young men in that parliament; for some of their elders had given way in disgust before Sir Henry Nevile's plan of "undertaking" for a court majority. The parliament thus said to have been "undertaken for" spent its breath on abuse of "undertaking," and its whole business was created by the disputed returns that arose out of it. But of all this, Eliot said afterwards, when drawing on his recollection of the first parliament in which he sat, "I hold that our jealousy in this case was the advantage of the ill-affected, who made it the instrument of their designs to dissolve that meeting, that they might follow their own projects and inventions then on foot; which (as we have since felt) trenched more upon the liberties and privileges of this kingdom, than the uttermost 'undertakings' in parliament can ever do." That parliament, which first met on the fifth of April, as it would not proceed to consideration of supply, was dissolved by the king, off-hand, on the seventh of June, and was familiarly known in its time as the Addle Parliament.

Young Mr. John Eliot went home. A few months later, young Mr. George Villiers, having perfected himself abroad in all graces, displayed his beauty before the eyes of his Majesty King James the First, then in or close upon his fiftieth year. Mr. George Villiers seemed to his Majesty so to adorn a divertissement given by the students of Cambridge, that he was even as an Adonis; and the mature male Venus having a keen eye for a well-dressed Adonis, loved the young man at first sight. Then, his mother, taking care to present him at court without delay, astutely bought for him (nearly all the dignities and offices being kept on sale by the royal shopkeeper), the office of cupbearer to his Majesty. So Villiers became the handsome cupbearer with whom his Majesty talked at his meals, and with whose clever answers he expected all his courtiers to be as much delighted as he was himself; the cupbearer also, of whose moral education that great Solomon took charge, hopeful that out of such an Alcibiades he might produce a Socrates of his own time, as beautiful as the old Socrates was not. The youth, who had a fierce will under a bland voice and effeminate skin, needed no plotting for his own advancement. The foolish king huddled upon his head, honours and riches. He was made, as fast as he could be made, knight, gentleman of the chamber, Baron, Viscount, Marquis of Buckingham, Lord High Admiral, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports; dispenser of the honours, gifts, offices, revenues of the three kingdoms. He took care of his family, his instruments, his

spies, while all that was servile in the nation scraped tongues at his feet. So, Villiers, afterwards Duke of Buckingham, rose in the "great" world after the short session of the Addle Parliament, and during the five years of Eliot's life, spent by Eliot as a quiet country gentleman in Cornwall, and as the sober father of a steadily increasing family.

At the beginning of those five years, the king's favourite was the Robert Carr who had won the king's eye, and broken his own leg, at a tournament: the handsome Scotch lad whom the king consoled by teaching him Latin Grammar as he lay sick of his broken leg, and had proceeded to make by swift stages of royal favour, Baron Branspeth, Viscount Rochester, Knight of the Garter, and Earl of Somerset. This favourite, as my Lord of Rochester, had fixed his eyes on the young and vicious Lady Essex, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk. The lady, as little Fanny Howard, aged thirteen, had been married to the Earl of Essex, only a year older than herself; and the boy husband had then been sent away to complete his education at the University, and on the Continent. When he came back to his young wife, who meanwhile had grown in every grace but the one that endures for ever, she received him with dislike; the king's handsome favourite, my Lord of Rochester, having pleased her eye not less than the king's. My lord of Rochester, who thought himself ordained at court to have whatever he desired, proposed the lady's divorce from Lord Essex, and her marriage to himself; but his young companion of old time and constant counsellor, Overbury, a man given to literature and a careless life, who was content to have become plain Sir Thomas, not only advised against, but finding advice vain, became active in, opposition to this infamous procedure. Rochester therefore procured his imprisonment in the Tower, where he afterwards supplanted the lieutenant with a creature of his own, through whom Overbury was killed by slow poison. The divorce was then procured, the wedding was honoured by Rochester's creation Earl of Somerset, and for two years the guilty favourite had received worship at the base court with his guilty wife, when, at the beginning of November, in the year sixteen 'fifteen, George Villiers being then in the first months of his career as next favourite, Somerset was sent to the Tower. Six months afterwards he received sentence of death as one of the murderers of Overbury. While dying of secret poison in his prison, Overbury had addressed to his false friend lines in his poem of "the Wife," of some of which, thought Sir John Eliot, for whom such events were the chief topics of political discourse during these years of his retirement on his Cornish property, none of the past writers it was so much the custom to laud could more perfectly have expressed this fancy:

> And all the carnal beauty of my Wife
> Is but skin deep, but to two senses known;
> Short even of pictures, shorter liv'd than life,
> And yet survives the love that's built thereon.

Of that poem written in the Tower, Eliot, when himself in the Tower, wrote, "As it is of my country, I honour it the more; and as it was the production of this place, my admiration is the greater, that in such solitude and darkness, where sorrow and distraction mostly dwell, such happy entertainments and such minutes were enjoyed."

Of the execution of Sir Walter Raleigh, basely accorded to the enmity of Spain against him—another of the moving events of this period of Eliot's outward repose, and an event of which he seems to have been a witness—Eliot, who had himself the genius of a writer of some mark but exercised it for his country as a keen thinker and speaker weighty though impassioned, wrote: "All preparations that are terrible were presented to his eye. Guards and officers were about him, the scaffold and the executioner, the axe, and the more cruel expectation of his enemies. And what did all this work on the resolution of our Raleigh? Made it an impression of weak fear, or a distraction of his reason? Nothing so little did that great soul suffer. He gathered only the more strength and advantage; his mind became the clearer, as if already it had been freed from the cloud and oppression of the body; and such was his unmoved courage and placid temper, that, while it changed the affection of the enemies who had come to witness it and turned their joy to sorrow, it filled all men else with admiration and emotion, leaving with them only this doubt, whether death were more acceptable to him or he more welcome unto death."

At the age of eight-and-twenty, Mr. Eliot of Port Eliot, still quietly resident on his Cornish estate by the Plymouth estuary and the Devonshire border, was knighted and made Vice-Admiral of Devon. About the same time my lord of Buckingham became Lord High Admiral of England, and it was from him, therefore, that Eliot received the patent of his office. Buckingham was a man of the court, who, helping none but himself, pushed his way and lost it. Eliot was an honest man of the people, who, warm with a sense of what England should be, went far to make it what it is. Eliot and Buckingham were, in a manner, friends at their first meeting. Now, they were High Admiral and Vice-Admiral in business relations with each other, but still, in a manner, friends.

But the pith of the relations between Vice-Admiral and Lord High Admiral, where the Lord High, &c., looks rather to the income than the duties of his office, is that the Vice-Admiral exists to detect on his own part of the coast all opportunities of fine or seizure that bring gold into the purse. What he gets, he divides; a part is his; a part is the Lord High Admiral's. Eliot looked simply and faithfully to the discharge of his duty; when he had done that, and had rendered minute account to save himself from slander, he was content. But there was in his part of the country one Mr. James Bagg, who was in the habit of telling people that if they trusted their affairs to their true friend, Mr. James Bagg, they would thrive the better.

Sometimes they throve the worse when Mr. James Bagg had only themselves to plunder. To Buckingham James Bagg transmitted, as a faithful slave, hints of what he could do in management of Admiralty business, and Buckingham understood that Bagg could gain his end in the enrichment of himself, and yet pour gold into the coffers of his patron; because there were merchants who could be robbed in the name of law taken in vain, and because there were poor mariners who could have bread taken out of their mouths and be fed with rotten meat, that the difference between good meat and bad for the poor sailor might buy the duke more jewels to his coat and Bagg more fat for his ribs. A base Bagg was far more, therefore, to the duke's mind than that simply honest, fervidly wise, and, in the eyes of all base courtiers, terribly shrewd, English gentleman, John Eliot. Sir John Eliot took and delivered to the powers that be, Nutt, the pestilent sea-robber, but all Sir John Eliot got for his pains was imprisonment in the Marshalsea, while Nutt went free with the king's pardon! This was when Eliot was thirty-three years old. Nine years afterwards, when Eliot, "low in body, yet as high and lofty in mind as ever," was dying in prison, the triumphant pirate was afloat: the greatest nuisance in his Majesty's dominions, and intercepting even the plate and household goods of the Lord Deputy upon their way to Ireland!

And while Eliot was serving an ungrateful state, as represented by my lord of Buckingham, in Cornwall or Devon and in the Marshalsea, King James had an idea, which was, of course, a bad one. Protestantism was being hunted down upon the Continent, and his own son-in-law had been hunted off a throne. He wouldn't fight. He would do wonderful things by treaties, marry his son to the Spanish infanta, and so make money. The English people hated Spain, as the strong type of continental despotism in civil government and in religion. But the treaties were in progress, when it occurred to my lord of Buckingham to go himself to Madrid with the young prince and expedite negotiations. His incompetent interference brought everything into confusion; so, making virtue of failure, he and the prince came home triumphant in defeat, joined the cry of the English people against Spain, and were received as friends of the country with bonfires and great rejoicing. But poor old King James, an instrument now in the hands of his favourite, thought himself very ill used. It was at that time, when Buckingham was enjoying his short-lived strut in feathers not his own, and had repute as a friend of the people, that Eliot entered as member for Newport the parliament of sixteen 'twenty-three. He made the first speech in that parliament; reviving and adopting the protest on behalf of popular rights with which its predecessor had been closed.

That parliament battled stoutly for the people, and in it Eliot made a noble speech against the king's prerogative of imposing taxes at discretion: which he showed, by the reasoning of a good free trader, to be not only injurious to the people, but also unprofitable to the king's exchequer. A French match for the prince was now on foot, and parliament remonstrated against concessions to any Roman Catholic court. But parliament was dissolved in dudgeon; Eliot went back to his wife and family, and looked after the enlistment of the poor creatures whom greedy officials were to starve and send with Mansfeldt to be thrown dead to the fishes or cast on the shores of Holland to be "eaten by hogs." He tried a batch of Turkish pirates who had plundered goods and stolen men from English coasts, and, when the next parliament met, that of 1625, he was at Westminster again. It was an eventful parliament. And of every event of it, of every great speech made in it, and even of the peculiarities of leading persons in it, we have now for the first time a full record in Mr. Forster's volumes. Eliot left a memoir describing it all, which, under its fragmentary appearance and Latin name of "Negotium Posterorum," has been overlooked till now. But now, that which was indeed the business of posterity, the tale of the great turning-point in English History, is given at last by Mr. Forster into our hands.

It is too much to tell here. The duke had fitted out a fleet for secret use, and wanted more and more money. The only thing he was yet known to have done with English ships, was, to deliver eight of them up to be used by France against the Protestants in Rochelle. He could not make that infamous use of English *men;* they mutinied, inserted protests in the Bible of their sympathising chief, and at all risks flatly refused to serve. But some greater work was said to be in hand, and the cry to the Commons was "Bleed, bleed!" The reply was, "After there has been redress of public grievances the people will have money and blood to spare." Sitting in plague-smitten London, with men falling dead around them, they resolutely deferred the question of additional supply. The sitting was adjourned to Oxford, also plague smitten. Determined still to claim the people's rights, they were dismissed, and met again after the great fleet had sailed to Cadiz upon its enterprise: of which Mr. Forster thus describes the character and issue.

"In plain words, it was an attempt to fill the king's empty coffers by a piratical foray on the wealth of Spain; and hence the zealous and secret appetite with which both king and duke had at the first pursued it. But ill-manned, ill-provisioned, and ill-commanded, it failed in every point. Sailing for Cadiz Bay, the shipping in that harbour might with ease have been taken; but the Spaniards were able to secrete their ships further up the harbour while time was lost at Fort Puntal, which, after the English captains had wasted their batteries upon it for four-and-twenty hours, surrendered, at the mere summons of a portion of the troops who were landed next day, without firing a gun. Wimbledon, landing the rest of his troops, then gave orders for the destruction of the communications with the main land, which Essex had found easy in the

great Queen's time, and which, if the Suazzo bridge had now been as promptly struck down, would have laid Cadiz open to an effective attack. But, as Eliot afterwards bitterly described it, it was a dry and hungry march into a drunken quarter. Discovering on the way several cellars stored with wine, the troops became insubordinate, drunken, and disorderly; and Wimbledon, in a fright, without either a capable man's resource or a strong man's decision, carried them headlong back to the fleet without having seen an enemy. At first he thought of retaining Puntal for better intercepting of the expected convoy, but all attempts to restore discipline were hopeless, and he reembarked with ignominy. He then cruised about after the Spanish fleet for eighteen days, suffered it to escape him unobserved during the night, and returned to Plymouth with disease and mutiny raging on all sides around him, the officers loud in denunciation of his incompetency, and the men decimated by a sickness which they attributed to foul play and dishonesty in provisioning the ships. Hundreds of seamen and soldiers were landed in a dying state, and more than a thousand were said to have perished before the ships reached harbour. For many months to come the appalling extent of the disaster showed itself visibly in every road and town on that western coast, and above all in the streets of Plymouth."

In the next parliament that met after this disaster, grounds of accusation against the favourite had so multiplied, that Buckingham was impeached by the House of Commons: Sir John Eliot being its spokesman. Eliot was sent to the Tower for his boldness of speech, and an attempt was made by the king and the duke to find matter against him; but they could not, and the House of Commons would do nothing until it had him back, so Eliot was released, and the king (with his head still loosening) was discomfited. In that kick against the traces, as in all previous struggles of like nature, the royal power suffered. Parliament could be again dissolved, issuing, as its last act, a Remonstrance to the People of England; the favourite could be saved for the moment by a nominal trial and a whitewashing in the Star Chamber. But King Charles's head was loosening, of his own obstinate act, and the fire was lighted that should not be quenched till it had burnt to ashes all the tyrannous pretensions of the crown.

Since sixteen 'twenty-five, Charles the First had been on the throne; but Buckingham still was king—king alike over the departing James, aged fifty-nine, and the incoming Charles, aged five-and-twenty. And now, in the very first year of his reign, Buckingham having him by the ear, Charles's head had been set in the wrong direction, and in the wrong direction he showed his determination doggedly thenceforth to go. He had declared for contest with his people, and would rule by prerogative. Against the bold John Eliot, paid informers, iniquitous courts, obsequious judges, were now the resources of the state. Eliot must be no longer Buckingham's vice-admiral; but the office was one for life, barring misconduct; the vice-admirals were not removable at pleasure. After the dissolution of June, sixteen 'twenty-six, Eliot, returning to his duties, was exposed to every plot against his honour that could be fostered by the malice of the favourite. But Eliot was careful to an exasperating degree. In every exercise of his power as vice-admiral, some weak point was eagerly sought to be invented. At last, the base James Bagg prompting a new case, it was resolved to condemn and sequester Eliot first, and proceed afterwards to inquiry. Sequestered accordingly, his patent of office was, "upon credible information, that complaint hath been made of divers foul abuses and misdemeanours." A bill of indictment was framed, and a commission appointed to take examinations: of which the record amounts simply to a strong assertion of the court victim's unblemished honour. Meantime, his Majesty tried the effect of a Royal Proclamation for supply; a general forced loan; Buckingham's restless passion and disordered vanity having urged England into a war with France. The causeless war was actually entered on; but the people of England refused to submit. NO was the reply met with by the commissioners of the loan in every part of England; the prisons were filled with recusants; and Eliot among their number was in June, sixteen 'twenty-seven, deposited as prisoner in the Gate-house. While Eliot was there imprisoned, Buckingham sailed for Rochelle, whence he brought back a shattered fleet and the disgrace of a disaster whereof Denzil Holles wrote: "This only every man knows, that since England was England it received not so dishonourable a blow." This second great disaster spread consternation over the land, and the cry for a parliament then became irresistible. Five days after deciding for a parliament, Charles, his head growing ever looser and looser, paid money for foreign mercenaries; by whose force he hoped to overawe its counsels.

But the parliament was called; the eighty or a hundred country gentlemen in restraint for the loan were set at liberty; and the popular candidates, including Eliot, Pym, Hampden, and a certain Mr. Oliver Cromwell, then first returned by the Puritans of Huntingdon, were almost everywhere victorious. The third parliament of Charles thus brought together, was, except only the one that followed it, the greatest in our history. John Eliot set forth in it, the people's grievances in the wrongs done to liberty and to religion; and the House resolved, passing over in silence the king's message, that a bill should be drawn containing the substance of Magna Charta, and other statutes concerning the liberty of the subject. Thus it gave birth to the immortal Petition of Right. The king, his head growing looser still, received it in silence, and afterwards returned a disloyal answer. Then Eliot boldly moved the House to a Remonstrance, and, on its publication, the wrath of the people against Bucking-

ham attained a height that would have swept him away from his station, had not the assassin's knife wickedly anticipated the righteous judgment of the nation. As this session was closing, the death of his wife—a mother never willingly absent from her children—called Eliot away to Cornwall. He placed some of the young motherless children with Mr. Gedie, their grandfather. On the twenty-third of August, sixteen 'twenty-eight, the Duke of Buckingham was stabbed to the heart at Portsmouth, by the zealot Felton, who was stirred to the crime by the common sense of the favourite's baneful influence over the state. It is certain that a wide sense of relief followed its commission.

Upon the reassembling of the House, much time was given to discussion of religious grievances, and the claim of the people to be taxed by their representatives alone. And it was in this session, on the morning of the second of March, sixteen 'twenty-nine, that Eliot entered the House of Commons for the last time. Upon Eliot's rising to speak, the Speaker, who was of the court party, stood up in his chair, and said he had the king's command for adjournment. Eliot persisted, the cry became general that he should proceed, and that it was not the Speaker's office to deliver such command, or the king's to direct their adjournment. Eliot rose again, and the Speaker stated that he had the king's command to quit the House after delivering his message: on which, at the impulse of the moment, members sitting near him seized him, one by each arm, and held him in his chair. At the same time Eliot began to speak, the whole house turned to listen, and the spell of his eloquence secured him hearing to the end.

"None," he said, in the course of that speech, "none have gone about to break parliaments, but in the end parliaments have broken them." He ended by producing the declaration drawn up by the Committee of Trade. The Speaker and the clerk, both servile to the court, refused: the one to receive, the other to read it. A scene of violent excitement followed. The Commons forcibly compelled their weeping Speaker to sit in his chair. In the tumult blows were struck. A message arrived from the king, in obedience to which the old sergeant-at-arms advanced and laid hands upon the mace. It was replaced, and the door of the house was locked on the inside. Then Eliot delivered in shorter form, the Declaration, and the Protestation of the Commons against levying or paying tonnage and poundage, or other charges contrary to law. And for myself, he said, as he sat down, "I further protest, as I am a gentleman, if my fortune be ever again to meet in this honourable assembly, where I now leave, I will begin again." Eliot's three resolutions were carried by acclamation, the door was then unlocked and out rushed the members in a body, sweeping before them the king's officer, who was about to bring up the guard of pensioners to force an entrance.

There was not another parliament in England for eleven years.

Proceedings were immediately commenced against the leaders of the Commons, and Eliot passed from the sight of his countrymen into the Tower. There, by letter and labour, he took thought for his children. The ignoble king never relaxed his hold upon that noble prisoner; and when Eliot, used to a country gentleman's life of active exercise, was known to be fading away in his smoky and cold dungeon, he was left to die therein. Nay, after he was dead, the king denied his very body to his children. But, of the free mind that found no prison within those stone walls, and of the great life that linked itself to the best life of England, nothing has died. Much was forgotten; but all now lives again, and shall live, while there are Englishmen to read it, in these pages of a biographer whose work is equal to his theme, and whose gallant exposition of a gallant career is a high service rendered to our Literature, our Freedom, and our Country.

SHAKESPEARE NOT A MAN OF PARTS.

Commemorate the birth of Shakespeare indeed! If you knew as much of Shakespeare as I do, or had suffered as much at his hands, you would curse the day that he ever was born. I tell you that Shakespeare has written more bad parts than any dramatic author living, or dead. I ought to know, for I have been acting in his plays all my life, at least ever since I began to act, and that was when I was young and a fool, and didn't know better. I won't subscribe to his monument; there. Why should I? What has Shakespeare done for me? Done? Why, made my life a misery and a torment. Look at the parts he has written for me. There's Reynaldo, that's a pretty bit of character, isn't it? "I will, my lord;" "My lord, I did intend it;" "Ay, very well, my lord;" "But, my lord;" "Ay, my good lord;" "Very well, my lord." And you have to put on a velvet shirt and a pair of tights to say that. There's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in the same play. A lively pair, they are. I've played both—might have been put to double them, if that had been possible—and never got a hand for either. It's my belief that Shakespeare wrote the part of Rosencrantz to spite somebody. He's got nothing to do, and has some of the hardest sentences to speak in the whole play. Try to get this into your head, and then when you have got it, try and speak it: "The cease of majesty dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw what's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel, fixed on the summit of the highest mount, to whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls, each small annexment, petty consequence, attends the boisterous ruin." That's Rosencrantz's best speech. Through one whole scene he has to stand with Guildenstern, like a knife and fork—that's what we call them in the country—and hasn't got a single word to say. In the scene following, his best point is, "Ho, Guildenstern!

bring in my lord." And I should like to know if you think Osric worthy of an immortal bard! "Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark," he says. "I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot;" "it is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed;" "I commend my duty to your lordship." My opinion is that Osric is a muff. I'd rather play a policeman in a pantomime, and be bonneted. You say I am picking out one or two of the worst parts. Am I? What about Voltimand, Cornelius, Francisco, Fortinbras, Bernardo, Marcellus, the priest, and the captain? Why, there are eleven characters in this one play that are as bad as they can be. Not one of them ever gets a hand or a laugh. No dramatic author of the present day would dare to write such bad parts. Why, the very supers would strike at them, let alone general utility. Take any play you like; one is as bad as another. The Merchant of Venice? What do you think are the feelings of an actor who has to buy a pair of new silk tights to play Salanio, or Salarino? They're both swells, and must wear silk tights; but they haven't a good line between them. A pretty thing, too, to have to dress yourself up for the Prince of Arragon, and find your own tights, hat, shoes, and jewellery. Once, when I was Prince of Morocco, I didn't have a dinner for a week, having been obliged to spend all my salary on the get up. Shakespeare, as an actor himself, ought to have known better than write such parts. Let me see what are the other characters in the play: Salerio, Leonardo, Balthazar, Stephano, and the Duke. I have played every one of them, and never could make anything of them —never knew anybody that could. Macbeth better? Not a bit of it. Worse. What do you say to Lennox, Rosse, Menteth, Angus, Cathness, Fleance, Siward, old and young, the Doctor, the bleeding officer, the porter, the old man? Why, it swarms with bad parts. Othello is not so bad; but yet you can't say there's much to be made of the Duke of Venice and Ludovico.

There's only one merit in Shakespeare's dukes, and that is, that they generally sit at a table and don't show their legs. You may wear your street trousers; only you must be careful to keep the tablecloth before you when you get up, so as not to show them. Take King John. I've played the King of France, but I must say a more ungrateful part I never dressed for; and a king too! Cardinal Pandulph is not worth a ——; well, if you object to the word, I'll say straw, which is weak, and doesn't half express my feelings. I repeat, the Cardinal is not worth —allow me to say, a malediction, even when doubled with the Citizen of Angiers, who has to stand on a box with a tin pot on his head on the top of a pasteboard battlement, at the risk of his neck. I once went on for Cardinal Pandulph in a red frock and sugar-loaf hat, which is the correct thing, and somebody called out "Mother Shipton, by Jove!" and when I popped my head over the battlements afterwards as the Citizen, the boys in the gallery shallooed me. It is no joke, I can tell you, to be a cardinal one minute and a citizen on the top of a wall the next. And that is a pretty speech to put into a fellow's mouth, when he's balancing himself on an egg-box, with a weak board in the centre, and hanging on like grim death to a pasteboard wall that wobbles about and threatens to come down with you every minute. It's a long speech, and it's a difficult speech, and very pleasant to deliver when King John is standing below swearing at you like a trooper because you don't give it right. Who could give it right? Just try this: "If not complete, O, say he is not she; and she again wants nothing to name want, if want it be not, that she is not he; he is the half part of a blessed man, left to be finished by such a she, and she a fair divided excellence, whose fulness of perfection lies in him." You don't recollect that passage? No, I should think not; who does? Nobody. If it wasn't Shakespeare you would say it was bosh. And just imagine the citizen sliding down a ladder to doff the tin pot and don the Mother Shipton hat to be ready for the next scene, where he walks in to "hail the anointed deputies of heaven," and demand why they spurn Mother Church and defy the Pope. It's not "once a priest, always a priest," when you play Pandulph, I can tell you. It's first one thing and then another, and when you are the Cardinal and when the Citizen, you don't always know for certain. As You Like It? No, I *don't* like it. Why, there are more bad parts in that play than I have fingers to count them on, including thumbs: Frederick, Amiens, Le Beau, Orlando, Dennis, Adam, Mar-text, Corin, Sylvius, Jaques. You call Jaques a good part, do you? Why, he has only to come in at the end, and say, "Let me have audience for a word or two; I am the second son of old Sir Rowland;" and then tell a long story about a boy and an old man, which nobody listens to. For my part, I always skip it, and when I have said that I am the second son of old Sir Rowland, finish up at once with, "This, to be true, I do engage my life." You don't recollect that in Jaques's part. I do; and I don't remember much else. Do I mean the melancholy Jaques? I do mean the melancholy Jaques; he's melancholy enough, in all conscience. "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players?" There's nothing of the kind in the part; I've played it often, and I ought to know. You mean that other Jaques. Oh, well; I have never played that, and if it ain't better than Jaques de Bois I don't want to. I tell you, you can't name a single one of Shakespeare's plays that ain't full of the very worst parts that ever were offered to an actor. And the worst of it is, that if you threaten to throw them up, you are told that you mustn't; for it's Shakespeare. And you are expected to take as much pains with them as if they were the finest things that ever were written.

It's pains thrown away; that's what I contend. Did you ever hear an audience applaud Cardinal Pandulph, or the First Citizen? Did

you ever know a critic mention Ratcliffe or Catesby in his review? I have been acting Shakespearian parts now for thirty years, and I don't think I ever was mentioned but once, and that was when I made a mistake and said, "The early village cock hath thrice done solution to the morn," and then the ill-natured critic congratulated me upon the introduction of a new reading of the immortal bard.

He was not for an age, but for all time, you say. Worse luck. How his plays came down through three hundred years to this day, is a puzzle to me. And what's more puzzling, is all this fuss that you're making about their immortal author. You have been a long time making your minds up to give him a statue, and you set to work at last when his plays have gone out of fashion, and when people won't go to see them even with orders. Is it likely that anybody will go and see Balthazar, and Montano, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? But you want to erect a statue to the author. Now, that's what I call inconsistent.

Will I go down to his birthplace? Certainly not. I know I should hate the very sight of it. What pleasure could it be to me to gaze upon the birthplace of a man who has left me nothing but an inheritance of bad parts? Why didn't he follow his father's trade, and be a woolstapler? If he had made stockings or blankets, and they'd been bad ones, they would only have troubled the people of his own time; they would have been worn out long before this. But his plays have lasted, confound them! Will I take a ticket for the actors' supper in his honour, price, to suit all classes of the profession, five shillings? No, I won't. Why should I? Shakespeare never gave me a five-shilling supper. Nothing like it. It's been mostly saveloys and a crust, with half a pint of porter. Rump-steak and onions at the best on ticket-nights. Go to the masked ball? I think I see myself; and have to buy, or hire, the rags to go in. No, I thank you; Shakespeare has cost me fancy dresses enough already. Would you have me get a new pair of silk tights, and go as Salanio; or hire a set of Bow-street jewels, and appear as the Prince of Morocco? Will I drink to the bard's memory on the day? No, I won't; but I'll tell you what I'll do; if *you* are inclined to be hospitable, I'll drink to *your* health now.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER VIII. GROWING DARKER.

It was late at night when Calvert left the villa, but, instead of rowing directly back to the little inn, he left his boat to drift slowly in the scarce perceptible current of the lake, and, wrapping himself in his cloak, lay down to muse or to sleep.

It was just as day broke that he awoke, and saw that he had drifted within a few yards of his quarters, and in a moment after he was on shore.

As he gained his room, he found a letter for him in Loyd's hand. It ran thus:

"I waited up all night to see you before I started, for I have been suddenly summoned home by family circumstances. I was loth to part in an angry spirit, or even in coldness, with one in whose companionship I have passed so many happy hours, and for whom I feel, notwithstanding what has passed between us, a sincere interest. I wanted to speak to you of much which I cannot write—that is to say, I would have endeavoured to gain a hearing for what I dare not venture to set down in the deliberate calm of a letter. When I own that it was of yourself, your temper, your habits, your nature, in short, that I wished to have spoken, you will, perhaps, say that it was as well time was not given me for such temerity. But bear in mind, Calvert, that though I am free to admit all your superiority over myself, and never would presume to compare my faculties or my abilities with yours—though I know well there is not a single gift or grace in which you are not my master, there is one point in which I have an advantage over you—I had a mother! You, you have often told me, never remember to have seen yours. To that mother's trainings I owe anything of good, however humble it be, in my nature, and, though the soil in which the seed has fallen be poor and barren, so much of fruit has it borne that I at least respect the good which I do not practise, and I reverence that virtue to which I am a rebel. The lesson, above all others, that she instilled into me, was to avoid the tone of a scoffer, to rescue myself from the cheap distinction which is open to every one who sets himself to see only ridicule in what others respect, and to mock the themes that others regard with reverence. I stop, for I am afraid to weary you—I dread that, in your impatience, you will throw this down and read no more—I will only say, and I say it in all the sincerity of truth, that if you would endeavour to be morally as great as what your faculties can make you intellectually, there is no eminence you might not attain, nor any you would not adorn.

"If our intimacy had not cooled down of late, from what causes I am unable to tell, to a point in which the first disagreement must be a breach between us, I would have told you that I had formed an attachment to Florence Walter, and obtained her aunt's consent to our marriage; I mean, of course, at some future which I cannot define, for I have my way to make in the world, and, up to the present, have only been a burden on others. We are engaged, however, and we live on hope. Perhaps I presume too far on any interest you could feel for me when I make you this communication. It may be that you will say, 'What is all this to me?' At all events, I have told you what, had I kept back, would have seemed to myself an uncandid reservation. Deal with it how you may.

"There is, however, another reason why I should tell you this. If you were unaware of

the relations which exist between our friends and myself, you might unconsciously speak of me in terms which this knowledge would, perhaps, modify—at least, you would speak without the consciousness that you were addressing unwilling hearers. You now know the ties that bind us, and your words will have that significance which you intend they should bear.

"Remember, and remember distinctly, I disclaim all pretension, as I do all wish, to conciliate your favour as regards this matter; first, because I believe I do not need it; and secondly, that if I asked for, I should be unworthy of it. I scarcely know how, after our last meeting, I stand in your estimation, but I am ready to own that if you would only suffer yourself to be half as good as your nature had intended you, and your faculties might make you, you would be conferring a great honour on being the friend of yours truly,

"JOSEPH LOYD."

"What a cant these fellows acquire!" said Calvert, as he read the letter, and threw it from him. "What mock humility! what downright and palpable pretension to superiority through every line of it! The sum of it all being, I can't deny that you are cleverer, stronger, more active, and more manly than me; but, somehow, I don't exactly see why, or how, but I'm your better! Well, I'll write an answer to this one of these days, and such an answer as I flatter myself he'll not read aloud to the company who sit round the fire at the vicarage. And so, Mademoiselle Florence, this was your anxiety, and this the reason for all that interest about our quarrel which I was silly enough to ascribe to a feeling for myself. How invariably it is so! How certain it is that a woman, the weakest, the least experienced, the most common-place, is more than a match in astuteness for a man, in a question where her affections are concerned. The feminine nature has strange contradictions. They can summon the courage of a tigress to defend their young, and the spirit of a Machiavelli to protect a lover. She must have had some misgiving, however, that, to prefer a fellow like this to me would be felt by me as an outrage. And then the cunning stroke of implying that her sister was not indisposed to listen to me. The perfidy of that!"

Several days after Loyd's departure, Calvert was lounging near the lake, when he jumped up, exclaiming, "Here comes the postman! I see he makes a sign to me. What can this be about? Surely, my attached friend has not written to me again. No, this is a hand that I do not recognise. Let us see what it contains." He opened and read as follows:

"Sir,—I have received your letter. None but a scoundrel could have written it! As all prospect of connexion with your family is now over, you cannot have a pretext for not affording me such a satisfaction as, had you been a gentleman in feeling as you are in station, it would never have been necessary for me to demand from you. I leave this, to-morrow, for the Continent, and will be at Basle by Monday next. I will remain there for a week at your orders, and hope that there may be no difficulty to their speedy fulfilment.

"I am, your obedient and faithful servant,

"WENTWORTH GORDON GRAHAM."

"The style is better than yours, Master Loyd, just because it means something. The man is in an honest passion and wants a fight. The other fellow was angry, and begged me not to notice it. And so, Sophy, I have spoiled the wedding favours, and scattered the bridesmaids! What a heavy lesson for an impertinent note. Poor thing! why did she trust herself with a pen? Why did she not know that the most fatal of all bottles is the ink bottle? Precious rage old Uncle Geoffrey must be in. I'd like to have one peep at the general discomfiture—the deserted dinner-table, and the empty drawing-room. They deserve it all; they banished *me*, and much good have they got of it. Well, Mr. Wentworth Gordon Graham must have his wicked way. The only difficulty will be to find what is so absurdly misnamed as a friend. I must have a friend; I'll run up to Milan and search the hotels; I'll surely find some one who will like the cheap heroism of seeing another man shot at. This is the season when all the fellows who have no money for Baden come across the Alps. I'm certain to chance upon one to suit me."

Having despatched a short note, very politely worded, to Mr. Graham, to the post-office, Basle, he ordered a carriage, and set out for Milan.

The city was in full festivity when he arrived, overjoyed at its new-born independence, and proud of the presence of its king. The streets were crowded with a holiday population, and from all the balconies and windows hung costly tapestries, or gay-coloured carpets. Military music resounded on all sides, and so dense was the throng of people and carriages, that Calvert could only proceed at a walking pace, none feeling any especial care to make way for a dusty traveller, seated in one of the commonest of country conveyances.

As he moved slowly and with difficulty forwards, he suddenly heard his name called; he looked up, and saw a well-known face, that of a brother-officer, who had left India on a sick leave along with himself.

"I say, old fellow!" cried Barnard, "this is your ground; draw into that large gate to your right, and come up here."

In a few seconds, Calvert, escorted by a waiter, was shown to his friend's apartment.

"I never dreamed of meeting you here, Calvert."

"Nor I of finding you lodged so sumptuously," said Calvert, as his eyes ranged over the splendid room, whose massive hangings of silk, and richly gilt ceiling, gave that air of a palace one so often sees in Italian hotels

"Luck, sir, luck. I'm married, and got a pot of money with my wife." He dropped his voice to a whisper, while, with a gesture of his thumb towards an adjoining room, he motioned his friend to be cautious.

"Who was she?"

"Nobody: that is, not any one you ever heard of. Stockport people, called Reppingham. The father, a great railway contractor, vulgar old dog—begun as a navvy—with one daughter, who is to inherit, they say, a quarter of a million; but, up to this, we've only an allowance—two thousand a year. The old fellow, however, lives with us—a horrible nuisance." This speech, given in short, abrupt whispers, was uttered with many signs to indicate that the respected father-in-law was in the vicinity. "Now, of yourself, what's your news? What have you done last, eh?"

"Nothing very remarkable. I have been vegetating on a lake in the north of Italy, trying to live for five shillings a day, and spending three more in brandy, to give me courage to do it."

"But your leave is up; or perhaps you have got a renewal."

"No, my leave goes to the fifteenth of October."

"Not a bit of it; we got our leave on the same day, passed the Board the same day, and for exactly the same time. My leave expired on the tenth of August. I'll show you the paper, I have it here."

"Do so. Let me see it."

Barnard opened his desk, and quickly found the paper he sought for. It was precisely as Barnard said. The Board of Calcutta had confirmed the regimental recommendation, and granted a two-years' leave, which ended on the tenth of August.

"Never mind, man," said Barnard; "get back to London as hard as you can, furbish up some sick certificate to say that you were unable to quit your bed——"

"That is not so easy as you imagine; I have a little affair in hand, which may end in more publicity than I have any fancy for." And he told him of his approaching meeting with Graham, and asked him to be his friend.

"What was the quarrel about?" asked Barnard.

"A jealousy; he was going to marry a little cousin I used to flirt with, and we got to words about it. In fact, it is what Sir Lucius would call a very pretty quarrel, and there's nothing to be done but finish it. You'll stand by me, won't you?"

"I don't see how I can. Old Rep, our governor, never leaves me. I'm obliged to report myself about four times a day."

"But you know that can never go on. You needn't be told by me that no man can continue such a system of slavery, nor is there anything could recompense it. You'll have to teach her better one of these days; begin at once. My being here gives you a pretext to begin. Start at once—to-day. Just say, 'I'll have to show Calvert the lions; he'll want to hunt up galleries,' and such-like."

"Hush! here comes my wife. Fanny, let me present to you one of my oldest friends, Calvert. It's a name you have often heard from me."

The young lady—she was not more than twenty—was pleasing-looking and well-mannered. Indeed, Calvert was amazed to see her so unlike what he expected; she was neither pretentious nor shy; and, had his friend not gone into the question of pedigree, was there anything to mark a class in life other than his own. While they talked together they were joined by her father, who, however, more than realised the sketch drawn by Barnard. He was a morose, down-looking old fellow, with a furtive expression, and a manner of distrust about him that showed itself in various ways. From the first, though Calvert set vigorously to work to win his favour, he looked with a sort of misgiving at him. He spoke very little, but in that little there were no courtesies wasted; and when Barnard whispered, "You had better ask him to dine with us, the invitation will come better from you!" the reply was, "I won't; do you hear that? I won't."

"But he's an old brother-officer of mine, sir; we served several years together."

"The worse company yours, then."

"I say, Calvert," cried Barnard, aloud, "I must give you a peep at our gay doings here. I'll take you a drive round the town, and out of the Porta Orientale, and if we should not be back at dinner-time, Fanny——"

"We'll dine without you, that's all!" said the old man; while, taking his daughter's hand, he led her out of the room.

"I say, Bob, I'd not change with you, even for the difference," said Calvert.

"I never saw him so bad before," said the other, sheepishly.

"Because you never tried him! Hitherto you have been a spaniel, getting kicked and cuffed, and rather liking it; but, now that the sight of an old friend has rallied you to a faint semblance of your former self, you are shocked and horrified. You made a bad start, Bob; that was the mistake. You ought to have begun by making him feel the immeasurable distance there lay between him and a gentleman; not only in dress, language, and behaviour, but in every sentiment and feeling. Having done this, he would have tacitly submitted to ways that were not his own, by conceding that they might be those of a class he had never belonged to. You might, in short, have ruled him quietly and constitutionally. Now you have nothing for it but one thing."

"Which is——"

"A revolution! Yes, you must overthrow the whole government, and build up another out of the smash. Begin to-day. We'll dine together wherever you like. We'll go to the Scala if it's open. We'll sup——"

"But Fanny?"

"She'll stand by her husband. Though, pro-

bably, she'll have you 'up' for a little private discipline afterwards. Come, don't lose time. I want to do my cathedral, and my gallery, and my other curiosities in one day, for I have some matters to settle at Orto before I start for Basle. Have they a club, a casino, or anything of the sort here, where they play?"

"There is a place they call the Gettone, but I've never been there but once."

"Well, we'll finish there this evening; for I want to win a little money, to pay my journey."

"If I can help you——"

"No, no. Not to be thought of. I've got some fifty Naps by me—tame elephants—that are sure to entrap others. You must come with me to Basle, Bob. You can't desert me in such a crisis," said Calvert, as they left the inn together.

"We'll see. I'll think over it. The difficulty will be——"

"The impossibility is worse than a difficulty; and that is what I shall have to face if you abandon me. Why, only think of it for a moment. Here I am, jilted, out of the army—for I know I shall lose my commission—without a guinea; you'd not surely wish me to say, without a friend! If it were not that it would be so selfish, I'd say the step will be the making of you. You'll have that old bear so civilised on your return, you'll not know him."

"Do you really think so?"

"I know it. He'll see at once that you'll not stand this sort of bullying. That if you did, your friends would not stand it. We shan't be away above four days, and those four days will give him a fright he'll never forget."

"I'll think over it."

"No. You'll do it—that's better; and I'll promise you—if Mr. Graham does not enter a fatal objection—to come back with you and stand to you through your troubles."

Calvert had that about him in his strong will, his resolution, and his readiness at reply, which exercised no mean despotism over the fellows of his own age. And it was only they who disliked and avoided him who ever resisted him. Barnard was an easy victim, and before the day drew to its close, he had got to believe that it was by a rare stroke of fortune Calvert had come to Milan—come to rescue him from the "most degrading sort of bondage a good fellow could possibly fall into."

They dined splendidly, and sent to engage a box at the Opera; but the hours passed so pleasantly over their dinner, that they forgot all about it, and only reached the theatre a few minutes before it closed.

"Now for the—what do you call the place?" cried Calvert.

"The Gettone."

"That's it. I'm eager to measure my luck against these Milanais. They say, besides, no fellow has such a vein as when his life is threatened; and I remember myself, when I had the yellow fever at Galle, I passed twenty-one times at écarté, all because I was given over!"

"What a fellow you are, Calvert!" said the other, with a weak man's admiration for whatever was great, even in infamy.

"You'll see how I'll clear them out. But what have I done with my purse? Left it on my dressing-table. I suppose they are honest in the hotel?"

"Of course they are. It's all safe; and I've more money about me than you want. Old Rep handed me three thousand francs this morning to pay the bill, and, when I saw you, I forgot all about it."

"Another element of luck," cried Calvert, joyously. "The money that does not belong to a man always wins. Why, there's five thousand francs here," said Calvert, as he counted over the notes.

"Two of them are Fanny's. She got her quarter's allowance yesterday. Stingy, isn't it? Only three hundred a year."

"It's downright disgraceful. She ought to have eight at the very least; but wait till we come back from Basle. You'll not believe what a change I'll work in that old fellow, when I take him in hand."

By this time they had reached the Gettone, and, after a brief colloquy, were suffered to pass up-stairs and enter the rooms.

"Oh, it's faro they play; my own game," whispered Calvert. "I was afraid the fellows might have indulged in some of their own confounded things, which no foreigner can compete in. At faro I fear none."

While Barnard joined a group of persons round a roulette-table, where fashionably-dressed women adventured their franc pieces along with men clad in the most humble mode, Calvert took his place among the faro players. The boldness of his play, and the reckless way he adventured his money, could not conceal from their practised acuteness that he was master of the game, and they watched him attentively.

"I think I have nearly cleaned them out, Bob," cried he to his friend, as he pointed to a heap of gold and silver, which lay promiscuously piled up before him.

"I suppose you must give them their revenge?" whispered the other, "if they wish for it."

"Nothing of the kind. At a public table, a winner rises when he pleases. If I continue to sit here now, it is because that old fellow yonder has got a rouleau in his pocket which he cannot persuade himself to break. See, he has taken it out; for the fourth time, this is. I wonder can he screw up his courage to risk it. Yes! he has! There go ten pieces on the queen. Go back to your flirtation with the blonde ringlets, and don't disturb my game. I must have that fellow's rouleau before I leave. Go back, and I'll not tell your wife."

It was in something less than an hour after this that Barnard felt a hand laid on his shoulder, and looking up, saw Calvert standing

over him. "Well, it took you some time to finish that old fellow, Calvert!"

"He finished *me*, which was worse. Have you got a cigar?"

"Do you mean that you lost all your winnings?"

"Yes, and your five thousand francs besides, not to speak of a borrowed thousand from some one I have given my card to. A bore, isn't it?"

"It's more than a bore—it's a bad business. I don't know how I'll settle it with the landlord."

"Give him a bill, he'll never be troublesome; and, as to your wife's money, tell her frankly you lost it at play. Isn't that the best way, madame?" said he, addressing a young and pretty woman at his side. "I am advising my friend to be honest with his wife, and confess that he spent his money in very pleasant company. Come along out of this stuffy place. Let us have a walk in the fresh cool air, and a cigar, if you have one. I often wonder," said he, as they gained the street, "how the fellows who write books and want to get up sensation scenes, don't come and do something of this sort. There's a marvellous degree of stimulant in being cleaned out, not only of one's own cash, but of one's credit; and by credit I mean it in the French sense, which says, 'Le crédit est l'argent des autres.'"

"I wish you had not lost that money," muttered the other.

"So do I. I have combativeness very strong, and I hate being beaten by any one in anything."

"*I'm* thinking of the money!" said the other, doggedly.

"Naturally, for it was yours. 'Twas mine, 'tis his,' as Hamlet has it. Great fellow, Hamlet! I don't suppose that any one ever drew a character wherein Gentleman was so distinctly painted as Hamlet. He combined all the grandest ideas of his class with a certain 'disinvoltura'—a sort of high-bred levity—that relieved his sternness, and made him much better company than such fellows as Laertes and Horatio."

"When you saw luck turning, why didn't you leave off?"

"Why not ask why the luck turned before I left off? That would be the really philosophic inquiry. Isn't it chilly?"

"I'm not cold, but I'm greatly provoked."

"So am I for *you;* for I haven't got enough to repay you, but trust me to arrange the matter in the morning. The landlord will see the thing with the eyes of his calling; he'll soon perceive that the son-in-law of a man who travels with two carriages, and can't speak one word of French, is one to be trusted. I mean him to cash a bill for us before I leave. Old Rep's white hat and brown spencer are guarantees for fifty thousand francs in any city of Europe. There's a solvent vulgarity in the very creak of his shoes."

"Oh! he's not a very distinguished-looking person, certainly," said Barnard, who now resented the liberty he had himself led the way to.

"There I differ with you; *I* call him eminently distinguished, and I'd rather be able to 'come' that cravat tie, and have the pattern of the dark-green waistcoat with the red spots, than I'd have—what shall I say?—all the crisp bank paper I lost awhile ago. You are not going in, surely?" cried he, as the other rang violently at the bell of the hotel.

"Yes; I am very tired of this fooling. I wish you hadn't lost that money."

"Do you remember how it goes, Bob?

His weary song,
The whole day long,
Was still l'argent, l'argent, l'argent!

She is complaining that though the linnet is singing in the trees, and the trout leaping in the river, her tiresome husband could only liken them to the clink of the gold as it fell on the counter? Why, man, you'll wake the dead if you ring in that fashion!"

"I want to get in."

"Here comes the fellow at last: how disgusted he'll be to find there's not a five-franc piece between us."

Scarcely was the door opened than Barnard passed in, and left him without even a good night.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXII. LILY IS FITTED OUT BY CUTWIG AND CO.

GREENWICH PARK was kept open later, long ago, than it is at present. It was getting dark when the lady and the child entered by the western gate. The countess seemed to know her way perfectly well, and they pursued the path towards the Observatory. The moon was up, and Lily looked about her in wonderment. The tall trees and the brown bars of shadow they cast upon the moonlit grass, which looked almost frosty in its brightness; the deer—more numerous then than now—that peeped furtively, showing their gleaming heads from the thickets, like fairies playing at hide-and-seek; the birds, disturbed in their dreams (by imaginary cats, perchance), that came fluttering off the boughs, and then, reassured, went fluttering back again; at all these sights the child looked, and marvelled, and forgot her sleepiness.

When they had skirted One-tree Hill, and gained the earthwork rampart that runs round the picturesque old edifice where Halley dwelt, they found it almost deserted. A soldier in a bearskin cap much too big for him, was whistling for want of thought, and flicking his penny cane against the brick wall. He was a temperate Grenadier, or else fortune had been unkind to him, and he had not got as much beer as he wanted. At all events, he was melancholy. A sweethearting couple were wrangling in a subdued tone on one of the benches. A long day spent in the society of the adored one of our hearts not unfrequently ends in mutual distaste.

The Grenadier had disappeared, whistling, and they were left alone. It was very calm and still. The stars seemed to smile on Lily. She looked up at the moon, and tried to shape its tranquil face into the pale handsome countenance of the tall gentleman who had been so kind to her. She still kept the something hard and smooth he had given her, slightly clasped in her hand. She did not dare to look at it, but by a quick furtive movement, slipped it into the bosom of her frock. Was Lily naughty, to practise concealment so early?

It was a time for good and tranquil thoughts; a time to be at peace and good will with mankind; a time for studious men, of pure and blameless lives, to ascend their watch-towers, and read the starry heavens through their long glasses. Lily gazed wistfully upon the shadowy prospect, the great panorama of verdure now bathed in soft haze, upon the distant river, the hospital domes looming large, the lights twinkling from the ports of the great hospital ship. The child, though no longer drowsy, felt as though this was her bedtime out of doors, and longed to say her prayers, and lie down under one of the tall trees, with the deer to keep watch over her.

The lady, seemingly, was in no such tranquil mood. She had been muttering to herself all the way, and Lily had been far too nervous to speak to her.

"Yes; they will have a wild night," she said, between her teeth; "an orgie! And my life! Is it anything better—orgie upon orgie, feast upon feast, boiling oil upon red-hot coals. Look here, you young cat," she pursued, turning upon Lily, "attend to me. Do you know who I am?"

The child, trembling in every limb, stammered a negative.

"I am your mother."

"I thought my mamma was in heaven, ma'am," Lily answered, in a very low voice; "Miss Babby always told me so."

And, indeed, when the child, perplexed by the frequent questions and occasional jeerings of the girls who had mammas, had interrogated Miss Barbara Bunnycastle on the subject, the governess had returned her the answer quoted above, not knowing what else to tell her. Had not M. J. B. Constant said that Miss Floris's mamma was dead?

"You are not likely to meet either of your parents there," pursued the lady, in a scornful voice. "Va chercher ailleurs, mon enfant, c'est là-bas que tu les trouveras. You will never have any other mother than me. Do you love me?"

The child was silent.

"That's right. Don't tell me a lie. If you had, I would have beaten you. Ah, my pullet, you don't know what blows are. Your little entertainment is all to come. Listen to me; you are going to school, a long way off. You are no longer to be made a pet and a darling of. Nobody ever petted *me*. You shall live hard; you shall work. Sacrebleu! you shall work, you cub!"

The child was, fortunately, too young to understand more than that the lady was very cross. What had she done that the lady was so angry with her? Lily was too frightened to weep; but she trembled more than ever.

"Ah! the night air. You will gain a chill," cried the strange lady, with capricious tenderness. "There, don't be frightened. Be still, and nobody shall hurt you." And she dragged the shawl off her own shoulders, and, hastily kissing the child, wrapped her in it. Her kiss seemed to burn Lily's cheek.

They went down the winding path again, and out of the Park, and into the town. And there—though the railway was open—the lady engaged a flyman to take them into London. The man named ten shillings as his fare, and the lady was too haughty to bargain with him, but she took it out in tormenting the unhappy wretch all the way to the Elephant and Castle, and all the way from the Elephant to Golden-square, Regent-street. She abused him for driving too slowly, and then for driving too fast; she declared that the horse was lame, and that one of the wheels was coming off. She accused him of being intoxicated (he was as sober a fellow as need be); she vowed that she would prosecute him for not having lamps; and she called all the turnpike-men robbers and extortioners.

"I suppose you want to cheat me out of some money to drink now," she observed, when this long-suffering Jehu had landed her at her destination.

"I don't want nothing to drink," cried the man, desperately. "I don't want nothing from yer. I only wants to be quit of yer."

"Don't be insolent!" the lady replied.

"Hinsolent!" exclaimed the flyman, throwing up his arms. "'Ear 'er. Am I a man or am I a convic? Am I a man or am I a slave?"

"You're an impertinent drunken fellow. Go home to bed."

"Ask the p'lice. Ask my master, which I have jobbed for in the same yard going on for nineteen year," continued the man.

"Now, what's the matter here?" the gruff voice of a passing policeman interposed.

"Nothin's the matter," returned the flyman, gathering up his reins, and settling himself on his box. "I've got my fare, and I'm satisfied. Only next time that lady wants to be driven to Old Scratch, I 'ope she'll 'ail another fly." With which he drove off.

The lady certainly did not possess, or else she did not care to cultivate, the art of conciliating the lower orders. The number of enemies she had made that day might have been calculated by the number of inferiors with whom she had come in contact.

They slept that night in a house in Golden-square, where this benignant person had taken lodgings. And the first thing Lily heard in the morning—for to her great joy she was not put to sleep with the strange lady, but was bestowed in a small adjoining bedroom—was an alarming commotion with the servant-of-all-work respecting breakfast: in the midst of which a stout landlady arrived, breathless, to give the lodger warning.

"Flesh and blood can't stand it no longer," said the indignant dame. "I'd rather have the parlours empty for six months than be scarified in this obstroperous manner. A true-born Englishwoman ain't to be treated like a black Injin."

"And like the dirt under your feet," added the servant-of-all-work, who was in tears.

"And you'd better suit yourself elsewhere, mum," the landlady continued.

"Canaille!" the countess replied. "I would not remain another twenty-four hours in your wretched hovel for twenty pounds. Give me your swindling bill, and I will pay it. I leave this evening."

The day was a strange one, and the lady scarcely exchanged half a dozen words with Lily. She was in too great a rage after the commotion, to breakfast in Golden-square, so took the child to a French coffee-house under the colonnade of the Italian Opera. Then they had a hackney-coach, and went a long long way through low and darkling Temple Bar into the City, until they reached a large shop in a crowded street. They entered this warehouse, and the lady said to the assistant, "This little girl is going to school, supply her with all she wants, and put it in a trunk."

The assistant, who was a joyous middle-aged man in spectacles, and whose stiff shirt collars made indentations in his plump cheeks, submitted that it would take a good hour and a half to furnish the young lady's outfit; and asked where he might have the honour of sending the esteemed order?

"I will take it away with me," she answered. "We will return in a couple of hours. Stay; can you take charge of the child for that time?"

The assistant replied that they would only be too happy to take care of the young lady for that period.

"Then stay here," said the lady to Lily, "and don't get into mischief. At four o'clock (it was now close upon two) I shall be here." And she went away.

"Is that your mamma, my dear?" the stout assistant with the spectacles asked, when the lady had taken her departure.

"Y—y—es," answered Lilly, hesitating somewhat.

"Ah! Dear me. A handsome lady, *quite* the lady, in fact," he continued. "A proud one, too," he said to himself. "Looks as if she had a devil of a temper. A Tartar, I'll be sworn. Now, Miss Eldred, my good young lady, will you be good enough to come here, and we'll get this little matter in hand."

Miss Eldred was a tall lady, but the prefix "young" could be applied to her only in courtesy. She was bony, but benignant. She was clad in brown merino, which fitted her so straight that her dress looked like the section of a pair of trousers. She smiled affably on Lily, and asked her whether she had ever been at school before? Upon which Lily told her all she knew about the

Bunnycastles, and things in general, and soon grew quite companionable with her. And then the little matter of her outfit was put in hand.

Lily never spent a pleasanter two hours in her life. It was a wonderful shop, and they seemed to sell everything. They showed her cabins complete with swinging cots, and lamps, and delightful little shiny washing-stands, and miniature chests of drawers, which they fitted up on board ships bound for Australia. They showed her great black sea-chests with "Captain Widgeon, Madras," and "Lieutenant Rampelbuggins, Cape of Good Hope," painted thereupon in white letters. They showed her bales of shirts, stacks of stockings, hives of straw hats, bags, portmanteaus, writing-desks, dressing-cases, sextants, chronometers, and cases of digestive biscuits.

"We sell saddles," the stout assistant remarked, with conscious pride. "We sell beer. We sell anchors, likewise school-books, also bonnets, and pickles, and parasols, and anchovy paste. We are general shippers. If you require preserved beef, there are five hundred cases of it in the left-hand corner. Do you want any curry powder? That's your sort. You've only to ask for a chain cable, my dear, and you can have it at per foot. We fit out everybody. A bride, or an Admiral of the Blue, a midshipman or an Indian rajah, a little school-girl, or the governor of Cape Coast Castle; it's all one to us. When you go to school, and they ask who fitted you out at two hours' notice, just hand 'em the card of Cutwig and Co., will you?"

He presented the child with a packet of address cards on the spot. "We furnish funerals, too," he went on chirpingly, "and we've sent out wedding-breakfasts in hermetically sealed tins; but we couldn't get the lobster salad to keep in the Indian Ocean, so that branch had to be given up. But if they want any Devonshire clotted cream at Singapore, or any canary-birds in New Zealand, they send to Cutwig and Co. for 'em. We might have done a powerful stroke of business in portable theatres for the colonies, but the late Mrs. Cutwig was pious, and wouldn't hear of it."

Meanwhile Miss Eldred, assisted by a slender, pretty girl, whom she addressed as 'Melia, and who was her niece, had been busied in trying various articles of apparel on Lily, and asking if she thought them pretty. And then the stout assistant, whose name was Ranns, asked Lily for her name, saying that he only knew her mamma as a customer, and a very good customer she was, but rather uppish. Lily said her name was Floris, not knowing whether she would escape censure from the strange lady for making that revealment unlicensed; and then Mr. Ranns whispered something down a pipe, and in a quarter of an hour afterwards a man in a fur cap suddenly popped up a trap in the floor, in one corner, and heaved forward into view a neat trunk covered with black leather, and inscribed with the name of MISS FLORIS in capitals of white paint.

"Stencilled and varnished at once, by our patent instantaneous process," remarked Mr. Ranns, rubbing his palms together in quiet complacency at the expedition in all matters observed by Cutwig and Co. "Lord bless you! we'd knock all the names of the officers of a seventy-four, with brass nails into their chests, in forty minutes. Yours is rather an uncommon name, my dear, else we generally keep the names of everybody in the Post-office Directory ready painted on portmanteaus, chests, and travelling bags, in sets of two hundred and fifty apiece."

At this stage of the conversation Miss Eldred suggested that the young lady must be hungry; and Lily, nothing loth, accompanied her to a back parlour of triangular shape, smelling rather too strongly of new chests of drawers, fresh feather beds, and oilskin hats, but still very snug and comfortable. And there, Lily, and Miss Eldred, and 'Melia, and Mr. Ranns, dined off a roast leg of mutton, and vegetables, and a very nice apple-pudding. Lily observed that Miss Eldred dined in her thimble, and Mr. Ranns in a hurry, with a pen behind his ear; likewise that the front of 'Melia's dress was so garnished with threaded needles, that it might have done good service as a martial buckler.

"Half a glass of sherry, and a nice rosy-cheeked apple — we export 'em, my dear, by hogsheads—for Miss Floris," chirped Mr. Ranns, "and then we must go to business. This is a mill that never stops, my dear." And, indeed, it never did. Business had been going on very briskly all through dinner-time; and a dozen times at least Mr. Ranns had popped up from the table, and bustled into the shop to supply intending shippers with flannel jerseys, or barometers, or bird-cages, or something of an equally miscellaneous description. The ad interim charge of Cutwig and Co.'s establishment was, however, left to a lanky youth of vacant mien, whom Mr. Ranns described as being rather soft in his head, and a poor salesman, but a capital hand at accounts.

After dinner, Lily was taken into the counting-house—a dark little box with a raised floor, to which you ascended by half a dozen steps, and which was fenced all round by balustraded panels, like a family pew. Here the vacant youth kept the accounts of the house, in a series of immense volumes, covered in rough calf and bound in brass. He was a good-tempered lad though imbecile, and permitted Lily to peep into one of the big ledgers, where she saw a great deal of writing in a neat, fat, round hand, almost as beautiful as copies.

"We call 'em our week day Bibles," remarked Mr. Ranns, facetiously. "We ship to all the world six days in the week, and go to church on Sundays."

Lily thought the big ledgers very beautiful, but wondered by what clairvoyance the vacant youth could contrive to write in them in the dark.

"Are you fond of apples," the vacant clerk whispered to her, with a friendly leer.

Lily modestly avowed a partiality for the fruit in question.

"Then 'ere's another," pursued the clerk,

"and another; I dote on apples, I do. I always buy 'em when I'm sent out with bills for acceptance. My wages is eighteen. I gives my mother, which is a widder, twelve, and I spends the rest on apples. I don't go to the theayter. Cutwig and Co. don't like it. It's wicked. I eats apples all day. They 'elps me with the figures." And the clerk resumed his caligraphy in the dark, munching as he wrote.

And now nothing would suit Mr. Ranns—by whom this amicable conversation had not been heard—but that Miss Floris should be taken up stairs and presented to the head of the house, Cutwig and Co. itself. So, up-stairs went Lily, pleased and amused, and in a front drawing-room they found, reading a newspaper, and with a bottle of wine before him, such a nice dear old gentleman, with a powdered head which wagged to and fro, and with gold-rimmed spectacles. This was Mr. Cutwig, head of the firm, Co. and all. He was eighty years of age, and father of his company. "Might have been alderman and passed the chair long ago, but the late Mrs. Cutwig was a lofty soul, and couldn't abear the corporation. She thought it low," said Mr. Ranns.

"Fitted her out, sir," was the simple speech accompanying the presentation of Lily.

"Good lad, good lad," piped old Mr. Cutwig in a very shrill treble (Mr. Ranns might have been on the shady side of forty). "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he'll be worth eighty thousand pound, and on the Court of Assistants. Here's a new shilling from the Mint, my dear."

He pulled out of his waistcoat-pocket a very dazzling piece of money, which, with a shaking hand, he gave to Lily. The child had some scruples as to accepting it, but, at a discreet sign from Mr. Ranns, she took it and thanked him.

"I came into this town nigh upon seventy year ago, by the Dover waggon, with one-and-fippence-halfpenny in my pocket," piped old Mr. Cutwig. "I slept on a hop-sack in the Borough market. Many a little makes a mickle. Honesty is the best policy. Ask Ranns. He's a good lad, and has been with me, man and boy, over seven-and-twenty year. I always took care of my shop, and my shop always took care of me."

Here the old gentleman's head began to wag more rapidly, and Lily noticed that he was holding his newspaper upside down.

"He's breaking fast," Mr. Ranns mentioned confidentially, as, the interview being over, he conducted Lily down stairs, "but he's as good as gold. Wonderful man of business in his time, my dear. He'd get up at six o'clock and ship two tons of goods to the colonies before breakfast, but he's a little out of date now, and when you come back from school you mustn't be surprised to see Ranns and Eldred over the door, late Cutwig and Co. Unless," he continued in a contemplative under tone, "Ranns turns into Eldred, and Eldred into Ranns."

It was four o'clock when they reached the shop again. Lily's outfit was quite completed, and she sat down meekly on her trunk, and waited for about half an hour longer, when a grand carriage came driving furiously to the door, and a powdered footman (there were two behind the carriage) descended and handed out Lily's protectress. The child saw the lady turn on the threshold as she entered and wave her hand in token of farewell to an old gentleman in the carriage. He was a splendid gentleman, with a fringe of white whisker round his face, and Lily somehow fancied that she had seen him before. Was it at the Greenwich dinner, yesterday?

The handsome lady was radiant. Lily had never seen her look so good tempered. She was pleased with everything, and, to Miss Eldred, was positively civil. Mr. Ranns handed her, with a low bow, the invoice for the child's outfit. The lady, just glancing at the sum total, instantly, and without question, disbursed the amount in crisp bank-notes. Then a hackney-coach was called, and the trunk hoisted on to it, and Lily herself was lifted into the vehicle.

The coach was just driving away, when Mr. Ranns, bearing a package which seemed to be a small canoe wrapped in brown paper, came running to the coach door.

"Beg pardon for the liberty, ma'am," he said, deferentially, "but would you allow this parcel to be put into the coach? Miss Floris is such a dear little girl, and we forgot to take off five per cent discount for cash. It's only a Noah's ark, with Cutwig and Co.'s compliments." And Mr. Ranns ran back again as hard as he could into Cutwig and Co.'s premises: thus obviating the possibility of the lady indignantly declining the present, or launching the canoe bodily at his head.

But the lady didn't decline it. She was in far too good a temper to do that. In fact, she condescended to tell Lily that it was kind, really very kind, of the people in the shop; and she so smiled on her, and looked generally so splendid and so benignant, that the child gazed upon her face with an admiring awe, as though she had been an animated rainbow.

"What do you think of *that*, little one?" she said in a triumphant voice, flashing before the child's eyes a great bracelet which encircled her wrist, and which blazed with diamonds. When suddenly she descried something shining in Lily's hand. It was the new shilling from the Mint.

The child, blushing and stammering, explained that the nice old gentleman with the powdered head had given it her, and that she had at first hesitated to take it, but that the other gentleman had told her to take it. The lady was in great wrath, snatched the coin from her, and flung it out of the coach window.

"I've a good mind to throw the Noah's ark after it," she cried, with a furious look. "You mean little wretch. Ma foi, you begin early to be a beggar. You have thief's blood in you. He would take anything, that base monster;" and she went on scolding Lily, but in a rambling

incoherent manner, for full five minutes. Her good temper was all gone.

By-and-by they came to Thames-street, which was full, as it always is, of carts, and drays, and barrels, and sugar-loaves, and piles of dried haddocks, and dirt, and clamour. And there, at the entrance to a narrow lane, stood an individual in a suit of oilskin, who was crying at the top of his voice, "The Bolong steamer! The Bolong steamer! This way to the Bolong steamer!" till he almost deafened Lily.

There was a porter waiting by the side of this individual, and he had a truck and some luggage on it. The luggage belonged to the lady. The porter touched his cap, and assisted the coachman to remove Lily's trunk to the truck, which he trundled down a steep passage and along a wooden pier, and so on board a ship, much larger than the steamer in which Lily had gone to Greenwich. The deck was covered with people, luggage, and merchandise. Everybody was running about in the most distracted manner, and a great bell kept dingdonging furiously. Then a rope fell across Lily's feet and hurt her toes, and the steam began to make a hideous noise, and the funnel began to vomit great masses of black smoke, and the captain, who stood on a bridge above the deck, gave a number of orders in a hoarse voice, which a dirty boy who stood below him repeated in a shrill one. And then the wharf and the warehouses beyond it, and the people upon it, all seemed to be moving away; but it was the steamer itself, and its crew, and Lily, who were moving.

She was on board the Harlequin steam-packet, bound for Boulogne. The shore drifted away from her; the last sound she heard on shore was the voice of the porter, with whom the lady had had a trifling dispute respecting payment, and who was shaking his fist at her, and bawling out:

"You call yourself a lady! You call yourself a lady! Yah!"

IN THE DANISH CAMP.

Many interesting anecdotes are told of the horses and dogs connected with the Danish army; and first I will speak of the horses; those noble creatures which, during this winter campaign, have suffered much, and accomplished incredible exploits, and on which not only human life, but all the war-material, depended during the retreat; the poor horses, which have suffered so patiently, without receiving thanks, warm woollen garments or blankets, and have made no complaints either of stores-managers or anybody else.

A cavalry horse is quite as familiar with the long list of varying trumpet signals as the rider himself; he stops instantly when the signal for halting is sounded; passes from a walk to a trot, from a trot to a gallop, without requiring any reminder from spur or rein. If his rider fall in battle, or lose his stirrups, he stops in a moment, and waits for him; if he remain lying on the ground, he stoops his head, smells at him, and when he ascertains that there is no hope of his remounting, makes his way back to his troop, wedges himself in his place in the ranks, and shares afterwards in the movements of the rest. Music has an amazing influence upon him. If an air be suddenly struck up, you will see the worn-out and mortally tired horse raise his sick head, prick up his ears, become animated, and move briskly forward to the front.

During a halt, or when quartered for the night, the cavalry division stretched out on the ground, lies sleeping confusedly together: a jumbled mass, which it would be impossible to disentangle; men and horses side by side, the rider using his horse as a pillow, or rolling himself together beside it to shield himself from the cold, the faithful creature seldom changing the position it has once taken. If it do so, it is with the greatest precaution; first it moves its head and legs, endeavouring gently to free itself; then it raises or turns itself very slowly and carefully, so as not to trample upon or disturb those who surround it. If the halt take place when the ground is wet or frozen, the rider will gladly force his horse to one side after it has lain down awhile, that he may occupy its place, which by that time is warm, if not dry.

The most affectionate relationship subsists between man and horse, as the result of their thus living together. The animal seems to understand everything connected with his rider; he knows his master's step, his voice, his peculiar ways; knows how to seek him out from among others; is a faithful, disinterested companion and friend to him, and has this advantage over many another good comrade:—that he does not grow weary even of suffering for him.

During the retreat from Dannevirke, a little way beyond Isted, a dragoon's horse fell; its rider helped it to rise; it rubbed its head against his shoulder, groaned, panted, then again dropped down. Its shoes were gone. There was a great crowd, and the road was very slippery; those who marched in front making it still worse for those who came after. In the mean time, the dragoon managed to get his horse on its legs a second time, and they again went forward. Presently the animal neighed. "It is for her supper that she is longing," said the soldier, "I know it well enough; but supper-time is long past. Lotte, dear," said he, addressing his horse, "you must try and wait till to-morrow."

At that instant a cart laden with bread drove by; the horse pushed forward and smelt at the cart. "How good and sensible Lotte is," said the soldier; "she knows there is no food to be had, so she contents herself with smelling at the bread!"

Almost immediately afterwards came up a baggage-waggon.

"What have you got there?" asked Lotte's master.

"Oats," answered the driver.

"Can you give me a handful for a poor sick horse?"

"Take it, my lad; it's paid for," said the driver.

Lotte's master did not wait to have the permission repeated; but possessed himself of a plump little bag which lay at the top of the waggon, and rode on with his prize.

"See thou, now, we have got something to keep us alive, Lotte, my beauty!" exclaimed he to his half-dead horse, when the command for the halt was given; "now, let us see what we've got!"

He opened the bag—it was full of coffee-beans. And, disappointed, he threw it, contemptuously, into a ditch.

Again the march was commenced; the troops hurried on still faster, for now the snow-storm, which prevailed in the earlier part of the night, had abated, and the day began to dawn; but the Austrians were at their heels, and had already attacked the rear with a superior force. Ever and anon, a sharp sound was heard, which they knew to be a volley of the enemy's musketry.

The poor horse slid out of the way, stopped, again groaned, shook its head, and fell to the ground. The dragoon stood, with the reins in his hand, and looked round for help.

"On with you!" cried an officer, whose troop was impeded by the fallen horse.

"She has strength for nothing more," said the soldier, with tears on his face.

"Shove the horse into the ditch; and you, fall into rank."

The soldier obeyed; but, when he had marched a little way, he stopped, and looked back. His faithful forsaken companion had raised her head, and neighed faintly after him. He ran back, patted his horse, and again taking the bridle in his hand, sat down by the side of the ditch. He remained sitting there, talking gently in loving cheering accents to his fallen companion, as long as the eye-witness who related this circumstance had him in sight. Whether he were taken prisoner, or whether his horse revived, is not known; probably, their fate was the same, let that be what it might.

This sympathy for horses is, perhaps, unconsciously shown in many of the soldier's expressions. A cavalry-officer, for instance, when speaking of an engagement, will say: "We lost so many horses:" the riders never being spoken of.

"Do you mind my going away, sir, on a little business?" asked a soldier of a lieutenant. "Where do you want to go?" "Why, you see, sir, I met Elise to-day as we came from outpost duty, and I want to run and have a look at her." "Elise, who is she?" "Goodness, don't you know, sir?" replied the man, amazed at the lieutenant's ignorance; "it's my old mare that was wounded at Mysunde. She is now got quite right again."

The soldiers in every campaign have always some favourite occupation with which they while away their idle time. In the Crimea they caught bullfinches, which they taught to whistle tunes. During the last Danish war, the soldiers manufactured little water-mills, which they set to work on every little stream and runnel of water. The troops quartered on the coast, made little ships of old wooden shoes and bits of planks; painted them black, red, and yellow; and put an old man at the helm, made of a potato, two wooden pegs, and a paper hat. By this, they meant to caricature the German navy.

This year they have begun to train dogs, but the time as yet has been short, and their occupations have been of so serious a character, that this amusement has not fully developed itself. Still, there is quite sufficient to show in what direction the popular taste inclines. One instance must suffice, merely premising that one dog will belong to several divisions of a regiment, the number of which is cut upon his back. He occupies the same quarters, and receives his supplies, in the same manner as his regiment does. He accompanies the regiment wherever it is ordered, both on the march and to the battle; meets the men at the alarm-post when the signal for marching out is given; cheerfully leaves the snuggest and most agreeable dog-quarters to go to the outposts; in short, is inseparably one with the brave fellows whose number he bears.

The dog about which I am particularly intending to speak was called Raps. I say *was*, because, unfortunately, he is now no more. Raps was a thin long-bodied dog, ugly beyond measure, half cur, half poodle, always draggled and dirty, but always in a good temper. He had two rows of snow-white teeth, and two black, brilliant, faithful-looking eyes. For the rest, he was a genius, a Jack-of-all-trades, who did great credit to his teacher, a man of Copenhagen, by trade a shoemaker, by nature an adventurer, endowed with a closely-shorn head and a pair of large brass earrings, but who had been raised by his merits to the post of under-corporal. In quarters, Raps was nearly always with the under-corporal, but whether the dog or the man most sought each other's company is not quite a settled question. It is enough that they spent their leisure hours together, the evidence of which appeared on the person of Raps. The under-corporal disentangled his long matted hair, then cut it with many artistic flourishes, till at last Raps presented a most grotesque figure. In the process of his transformation, he had at one time small tufts of hair hanging over his eyes and jaws, along his back, and down his legs, until he resembled a creature set over with prickles; then his head was closely cropped and coloured bright green, the hair from his back was cut off, and his moustaches were twisted up to his eyes; in short, there was no end to the rich devices of the under-corporal. Nor did he neglect Raps's intellectual training, as was evident one day when Raps accompanied him with some reports to the captain. When the under-corporal entered the room, with his fingers to

the edge of his cap, the captain burst into a loud laugh. And no wonder, for in the doorway behind him stood Raps on his hind legs, precisely in the same position, with his right fore-paw to his head. The dog, with his half-crazy coiffure and grotesquely-cut hair, looked so genuinely comic that even his master could not help laughing. Raps alone preserved his gravity, and remained standing stock-still, with his paw to his head.

"What sort of animal is that?" demanded the captain.

"It is a dog, sir, which is as wise as a mortal," replied the under-corporal. "Step forward, Raps," said he, addressing his pupil, "and show the captain what the Danes shall have."

On this, Raps, advancing a few steps on his hind legs, pretended to be hugging and embracing something, with the most comic delight. The under-corporal on this cast a triumphant look at the captain, and continued to the dog, "And what shall the Austrians have?" Raps laid himself on the ground, stretched out his four legs, and appeared stone dead. Another glance, and a fresh question, "What, then, shall the Prussians have?" Raps rose, showed his teeth, and his contempt for the imaginary Prussians by turning his tail upon them.

After these proofs of his scholar's cleverness, the corporal, having transacted his business, took a step backward and bowed; Raps, again standing on his hind legs, did the same. And so the two withdrew.

This intelligent and interesting animal was always present with his regiment, on drill or at funerals; never trembled in danger, never gave way in exertion, his whole life was devoted to the regiment which had adopted him. Was it to an engagement or to the outposts that they were going, he marched of his own accord by the side of the first man in the left wing, silent and apparently immersed in thought, as if he were well acquainted with the object of the expedition. He might then meet his dearest dog-friend, but he did not notice him: or if he did, it was with an air of such gravity as seemed to say, "This is no time for barking or wagging of tails."

In the retreat from Dannevirke, Raps leapt up by the side of the driver of a bread-cart. When some of the soldiers of his regiment, worn out by fatigue and unable further to exert themselves, crept to the side of the cart, Raps welcomed them, and with every demonstration of satisfaction saw them stowed in the straw, and the cover closed over them; but if any other soldiers sought the same shelter, he warned them off with such furious determination that they found it best to leave him and his companions in undisturbed possession of their comfortable quarters.

One morning Raps was on duty with his regiment at the extreme outposts, on the other side of a wood before the redoubts. It had been bitterly cold through the night, with alternating rain and snow. The sky was leaden grey, and the faces of the poor drenched soldiers were the same. Immediately before the hour of relief, a Prussian column came from behind the fences, below the line of the outposts, and began to fire on the Danes. After some time the enemy's fire slackened, the smoke cleared away, and the Danes occupied their former position. But several had been killed; among others, the under-corporal with the brass earrings. During the attack, Raps had gone backwards and forwards, his tail in the air, facing the enemy and barking furiously. Now, however, when all was over, he was found lying silent on a snow-drift, a few steps from the corporal, a pool of blood around him, making it evident that he, too, had been shot. The news of his death spread an universal sorrow through the whole line. When the discharge from duty came, the men collected round the spot where he had breathed his last.

As regards the retreat from Dannevirke, I must, however, tell something which refers to the men, and not to the lower animals; something of the strange visions which haunted these poor Danish soldiers on their sorrowful retreat. The account I give is well authenticated. I take it from the Erik Bägh, merely premising that these strange visions were not confined to a few individuals only, but that it was the few individuals only who were exempt from them:

"I have scarcely indeed," says the writer I quote, "conversed with a single person who took part in that unhappy retreat—all of whom, it must be remembered, had previously been exhausted by want of rest, of warmth, and of food — who had not experienced the same phenomenon. That, however, which astonished me most, perhaps, was the remarkable analogy in the images presenting themselves to men of totally dissimilar constitutions, temperaments, and bodily and mental development.

"We all know that in delirium tremens, and such disorders as are occasioned by congestion of the blood to the brain, the mind of the unhappy subject is generally haunted by larger or lesser black phantoms, flies, beetles, serpents, rats, chimney-sweeps, and so forth, up to gloomy funeral processions. One case is on record where a Swedish patient had so far degenerated as to behold nothing but a visionary procession of archbishops! The cause of this peculiar phenomenon, however, is owing to purely mechanical obscurations of sight.

"But what can be the cause of the visions which appeared to the greater number of our worn-out soldiers, and which were generally of the same character: namely, interminable perspectives of splendid palaces and houses on both sides of the road? I have spoken to officers and privates, natives of towns and country places, and have learned that the same class of vision has appeared to all. In another respect I have also found a remarkable coin-

cidence in the generality of cases: namely, that in spite of the night being pitch dark, the palaces and buildings were bright, as seen by the clearest moonlight.

"Other visions have been of a still more fanciful character.

"One man appeared to be marching through incessant ranks of soldiers, who, with arms presented, filled both sides of the way; another saw innumerable rows of white tents the whole length of the line; a third, a luxuriant summer landscape; a fourth, arcades of Oriental lamps; a fifth, a complete illumination, with crackers, rockets, and fountains of fire, as far as the eye could reach. It was nearly always the same object which presented itself, repeated in endless variations, as a Fata-Morgana, and the object was seldom of a painful or disagreeable character. Of the latter class of illusion I have only heard one or two instances:

"The first was from an officer who was obliged to employ whatever time he could spare from severe field service, in writing and making calculations in figures. 'By degrees,' said he, 'as the day darkened, and distant objects became indistinct, the white snow-covered plain raised itself perpendicularly on either hand, like two immense sheets of paper, which were ruled like the pages of an account-book, the posts of the telegraph representing the vertical, and the wires the horizontal, lines; and as I went on becoming ever closer and closer to each other, and at length crowded with names and figures, which in the fifth column, being all fractional, were enough to torment a man in the full use of his faculties to death, much more a poor wretch who felt himself on the eve of losing his senses altogether.'

"The other was from a private from Copenhagen, who had been unusually exposed to hunger, cold, and night duty, and who was barely able, by the extremest exertion of his will, to drag himself along in the ranks:

"'What tormented me most,' he said, 'was, that whichever way I turned my eyes, I saw nothing but great storehouses, from all the windows of which looked forth famished warehousemen, making faces at me, and singing, "Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!" just as is sung in Orpheus. I heard this tune for more than four hours together, and though I talked to my comrades it was all the same, still the terrible melody went on, Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha! and the famished countenances made grimaces at me, keeping time to the hideous tune. It was more than mortal could bear.'

"The effect of this excessive fatigue and anxiety was such, that many of the sufferers seemed nearly passing into mental aberration. There were some who temporarily lost their memory to that degree, that they neither knew whence they were coming nor whither they were going. There were officers who were perfectly unable to state to what regiment they belonged; and I have heard one of the bravest among them acknowledge that there was a certain half-hour, during which he was in despair, feeling, that in case of an attack, he should be as much at his wits' end as a drunken man."

FARMERS IN MUSLIN.

Can our readers picture to themselves an Agricultural Exhibition, at which the farmers are attired mainly in white muslin, with turbans instead of hats, and slippers instead of boots—the said farmers, moreover, having black or brown faces, decorated perhaps with paint, and generally set off by earrings of gold and precious stones, not to mention other rings wherever it is possible to place them—on the arms and the fingers, the ankles and toes? Such an anomaly may have been suggested at Hanwell, but it is only lately that it has found existence in real life; and, even now, it may not be seen in this country. To behold it one must have been at Calcutta a few weeks ago, when a proceeding was enacted which had been hitherto unparalleled in India.

For the idea of this novel experiment, the local public are indebted, it appears, to the excellent Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the Hon. Cecil Beadon. It occurred to him, we are told, in the early part of last year, that an Agricultural Exhibition, somewhat on the model of those held in England, would be of material benefit to the country, by improving the breed of cattle, introducing a better class of agricultural implements, and stimulating the tillers of the soil to greater care concerning the quality of the produce brought to market. To carry out these objects the most effectual measures were taken. Local committees were appointed in every part of India, and announcements of the nature of the scheme were circulated in all the local languages. The Bengal government advanced a sufficient sum of money for prizes, which were on a very liberal scale, and for the general expenses of the Exhibition: so there was no occasion to solicit subscriptions. But contributions of objects to be exhibited were demanded from all sides, and the response was satisfactory in the highest degree. By the end of the year, the collections were nearly completed. These, consisting of live stock, machinery, and produce, were all properly classified, and placed in temporary buildings erected on a large piece of ground assigned for the purpose. And, on the 15th of January, the Exhibition was formally opened by Sir John Lawrence, who arrived out just in time for the ceremony. In honour of the occasion were gathered together natives of each presidency and all the provinces. Many were tempted for the first time from their homes; Rajahs and Nawabs, landowners and merchants, equally stimulated by the double attraction of a *tamasha*, and its promise of practical results. In the "saloon tent," where the Governor-General presided, was an array of notables, Native and European, such as the City of Palaces has seldom seen; the gorgeous costumes of the Natives, and brilliant uniforms of the British

officers, being displayed the more conspicuously by contrast with the sombre civilian garb, which has a distinction of its own, not only because it is in the minority, but because it is still associated with the highest positions and the largest fortunes in the country. The ladies, who were very liberally dispersed among the company, were an exhibition in themselves, and gave to French millinery an attraction beyond the reach of martial accoutrements, the products of Persian looms, the gold work of Delhi, or the precious stones of the Dekhan. It was the first public occasion at which the new Viceroy was present, and that it should have been one for the advancement of agriculture he declared to be a source of great satisfaction to him. For, as he went on to observe, in a country like India, which is poor in comparison with its vast extent, and in which the commerce is small in relation to the numbers and productive powers of the population, it is on the progress and success of agricultural operations that national prosperity must largely depend. It was impossible, he said, that the intercourse of various persons gathered together from all quarters to witness the display of the produce of many places and of machinery calculated to improve and stimulate production, could fail to cause manifold benefits to arise in the future: especially when the experience thus gained should be brought to bear upon future exhibitions in every part of the empire.

The movement thus happily begun, is, indeed, a fortunate one for India, where agriculture, however well understood in its rude form, is without any of the scientific and practical aids it receives in this country; but where the same implements are in use, and the same processes are employed, as in the earliest of recorded ages. That the experiment just made, has been attended with complete success is beyond a doubt; and the success is attributable, in the first place, to the influence of government, as wisely directed by Mr. Beadon, and in the second place to the railway. Without the first, the Agricultural Society, which co-operated in the object, could have done very little; and without the second, even the influence of government would have been of far less avail. The Natives, who want governing, and wait for the action of authority, would have responded but feebly to a private appeal, mistaking it, probably, for some plan for the encouragement of the "independent European" rather than themselves; and without the railway, the want of swift, certain, and inexpensive communication, would have been an insuperable bar to success. Not, however, that the exhibition is to be considered in the light of an eleemosynary aid. The government advanced the funds in the first instance, but it was intended that the payments made for admission should render the movement self-supporting; and, in this respect, the object has been nearly accomplished, there being but a small balance of expenditure left for the government to defray.

Of the material of the Exhibition we have at present but a meagre account. Descriptive reporting does not flourish in India, for the simple reason that descriptive reporters are not to be had, and the editors of the journals have little time to devote to such special work. We gather, however, that the machiners, the most important and attractive feature, way of a very satisfactory character. The steam ploughs, the brick-making machine, saw-mill, and locomotive, we are told, were all excellent of their kind, and attracted much attention: as well as smaller articles, such as centrifugal pumps, and so forth. Among other novelties was an eight-horse power engine and thrashing machine, intended to bewilder the native mind by being set to work in all its various departments—separating the grain from the straw, blowing away the chaff, and pouring out the clean product. A seed-crushing and oil mill is also noticed as a magnificent machine. The number of models and tools is very great, and the show of cattle is said to be exceedingly good. In every department of the exhibition the Natives took an eager interest, and nothing could have been more pleasant than the entire proceedings, but for one little mishap.

The Exhibition had been witnessed by all classes of the community save one. While everybody else disported among the wonders which had been brought together, the Native ladies still remained caged birds, pining among their halls and bowers, solitary though surrounded by crowds, ignorant though in the midst of intelligence. Anybody who has tried to keep even a reasonable British female at home when a sight was to be seen out of doors, can form some idea of the difficulty of the task in the case of these imperious Oriental beauties. But how to accommodate them? That was the question. They could not see without being seen, if they appeared in the crowd; that was clear; and to make them a part of the Exhibition was a thing not to be thought of. It was at last decided to give them a private view—by night. Fortunately there was a full moon, which in the East makes night nearly as bright as day for practical purposes, and a great deal more romantic. Accordingly, it was ordered on behalf of the *beebies*, *burra* and *chota*—that is to say, the ladies, greater or less, as the case may be—that the grounds should be kept open until midnight on a particular evening, all male kind being rigorously excluded after sunset, with the exception of a few Coolies necessarily in attendance, whom it was obligingly agreed to consider non-existent for the occasion. A number of influential Natives pledged themselves that their establishments should duly attend, and it was believed that the appeal would be generally responded to. In order to make things as pleasant as possible, the wives of some of the high European officials volunteered to receive their Native sisters, and act as hostesses. The night came, and the Mussulman and Hindoo ladies came. They were delighted with everything they saw, and all passed off as pleasantly as possible.

Next morning all Calcutta—that is to say, the

European portion of the community—congratulated itself upon the triumph which had been achieved in the breaking down of the old barrier of Native exclusiveness, from which the happiest results were augured. Nobody had a doubt that gatherings of the kind would bring about a state of things interfering considerably with the *purdah*—that is to say, the curtain, the symbol of seclusion. Already, indeed, said solemn talkers, the community of interest brought about by the material progress of the country, promises to create a new state of society, in which Mussulman and Hindoo women cannot retain their old degraded condition; and this is the more evident when we consider the development of education, which will find the next female generation a great deal too well fitted for society to be easily kept out of it.

But a whisper got afloat that the Native ladies who attended the Exhibition were not generally of the high class supposed; and the suspicion was confirmed by a Native journal, which loudly denounced the innovation. No Native gentleman, said the writer, could allow the inmates of his Zenana to appear in a place even so partially public without dishonour to himself; and no Native lady could so appear without loss of her dignity and modesty. His only source of satisfaction, he proceeded to say, was, that this reproach had been incurred only in very rare cases; the great majority present having been not only of the lowest social grade, but even the larger number of those of the worst class, infamously separated from society. That this statement was in the main true there seems no reason to doubt, and what explanation will be offered by the Native gentlemen who suggested the concession remains to be seen. Perhaps they were unwilling agents in the matter—had promised more than they could perform—and not being able to procure the attendance of the right ladies, had allowed the wrong ladies to take their places, in order to avoid giving offence. But this is certain, that European society considers itself to have been insulted by Native society, and that a breach has been made between the two which, at the present time especially, is greatly to be deplored. Of the feeling which has thus arisen, the first sign was the exclusion of all Native gentlemen from Sir John Lawrence's first great entertainment at Government House—an unexampled measure, which could have been forced upon a statesman like Sir John only by very serious considerations. That a better understanding will be re-established may be anticipated; but it will not be just now; and it is plain from this little piece of experience that we are not quite so near the annihilation of Native prejudices as some sanguine persons suppose.

The Agricultural Exhibition, however, remains a success as far as its intended objects are concerned; and the example of Bengal is being already followed in the Punjab and elsewhere. The material progress of the country, promoted by these means, must prepare the way for the more important ends in view, and education and time must be left to do the rest.

THE EYES OF MAHMŪD.

Sultan Mahmūd, son of Sabaktagin,
Swept with his sceptre the hot sands of Zin,
Spread forth his mantle over Palestine,
And made the carpet of his glory shine
From Cufah to Cashmere; and, in his pride,
Said, "All these lands are mine."

At last he died.

Then his sons laid him, with exceeding state,
In a deep tomb. Upon the granite gate
Outside, they graved in gold his titles all,
And all the names of kingdoms in his thrall.
And all his glory. And, beside his head
They placed a bag of rice, a loaf of bread,
And water in a pitcher. This they did
In order that, if God should please to bid
His servant Death to let this sultan go,
Because of his surpassing greatness, so
He might not come back hungry. But he lay
In his high marble coffin night and day
Motionless, without majesty or will.

Darkness sat down beside him, and was still.

Afterwards, when a hundred years had roll'd,
A certain king, desiring to behold
This famous sultan, gave command to unlock
The granite gate of that sepulchral rock,
And with a lamp went down into the tomb,
And all his court.

Out of the nether gloom
There rose a loathsome stench intolerable.
Hard by the marble coffin, on a sel
Of mildew'd stone, the earthen pitcher stood,
Untouched, untasted. Rats, a ravenous brood,
Had scattered all the rice, and gnaw'd the bread.
All that was left upon this marble bed
Of the great sultan, was a little heap
Of yellow bones, and a dry skull, with deep
Eye-sockets. But in those eye-sockets, lo!
Two living eyes were rolling to and fro,
Now left, now right, with never any rest.

Then was the king amazed, and smote his breast,
And called on God for grace. But not the less
Those dismal eyes, with dreadful restlessness
Continually in their socket-holes
Roll'd right and left, like pain'd and wicked souls.
Then said the king, "Call here an Abid wise
And righteous, to rebuke those wicked eyes,
That will not rest."

And when the Abid came,
The king said, "O wise Abid, in the name
Of the high God that judges quick and dead,
Speak to those eyes."

The Abid, trembling, said,
"Eyes of Mahmūd, why is your rest denied
In death? What seek ye here?"

The eyes replied,
Still rolling in their withered sockets there,

"God's curse upon this darkness! Where, O where
Are my possessions? For, with fierce endeavour,
Ever we seek them, but can find them never."

YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE.

Not many years ago, being then young, ardent, and confiding, with nothing to do, and all the world before me, I received a letter from Mr. Harrison, a solicitor of my acquaintance, offering me a seat on the board of a new insurance company. I had at that time a very exalted idea of the importance of the office of director, and felt highly complimented by the invitation. I immediately waited upon Mr. Harrison at his office, to thank him for his kind intentions, but at the same time to make him acquainted with circumstances in my position which I considered inconsistent with the dignity and responsibility of a director of a public company. I explained that I had, as yet, no profession and no standing in society, and, moreover, that I was minus that great essential, money.

"My dear sir," said Mr. Harrison, "these little matters are of no consequence whatever; a good name is all that is required in a director, and you have one—Ralph Abercrombie, Esq., M.A., of Brasenose College, Oxford. What could be better?"

"True," I said, "the name is a most honourable one; but I understand that a director is required to take a large number of shares, and I candidly tell you that I am not in a position to——"

"Make your mind easy on that point, my dear sir," said Mr. Harrison; "if necessary I will qualify you."

"It's very kind of you, I'm sure," I said; "but I scarcely like——"

"My dear sir," said Mr. Harrison, anticipating what I was going to say, "you need have no scruple about the matter; the thing is done every day. I have qualified scores of directors in my time. You know Lord Churchmouse, Chairman of the Paramount Life and Fire?"

I said, of course; he was a well-known public man.

"Exactly; a well-known public man, a representative man in the insurance world; but between you and me—and you will understand this is entirely masonic," said Mr. Harrison, laying his finger on his nose—"*I* qualified him. In fact, his lordship always makes it a rule to be qualified; and he's worth it, for he's one of the best directors going. If there were only more days in the week, and more hours in the day, Lord Churchmouse might be as rich as Rothschild, instead of being as poor as Job."

"How do you mean?" I asked.

"Why, his lordship lives upon his director's fees; the more boards he attends the more he gets."

I said I thought it rather a shabby way for a lord to get his living.

"Shabby! my dear sir," said Mr. Harrison, elevating his eyebrows, "how can you say so? Did you ever consider what a director of a public company ought to be? No; I see you have not. I will tell you. He ought to be a man of talent, of tact, of energy, of business habits, shrewd, sagacious, and, above all, enterprising. We don't want a dolt with his pockets full of money, to sit at a board; we want a smart man, with his head full of brains. The public make a great mistake about this matter. They think a director ought to be simply a man of property, and never reflect that the real desideratum is the man of business. Does a City firm choose a manager of its affairs on account of his wealth? No; but because the person is well qualified for the work; and a well qualified man in a City house will get from five hundred to a thousand a year; while the director of a public company is obliged to be content with a paltry fee of one or two guineas for each attendance at the board. My dear sir, if I had my way, I would do away with the qualification altogether, choose directors for their business qualities, and pay them handsome salaries."

I admitted that his argument had some force.

"Very well," said Mr. Harrison; "on this principle I want you to be a director of the new company I am now projecting. You have a good name, you are a graduate of an university, and, above all, you are a man of energy and sagacity, with a decided turn for business."

I said I felt flattered.

"Not at all, my dear sir," said Mr. Harrison, "I am merely doing you justice. I have observed you. I think you will make a good director; and, as I said before, if necessary I will qualify you. The advantages to yourself, I need scarcely say, will be considerable; you will be introduced to public men and public life, you will get an insight into a most important branch of business, and you will be paid for your services."

Mr. Harrison's representations were altogether so plausible, and I found so many worthy people who looked upon insurance speculation as perfectly legitimate, and so many more who envied me my good fortune in being offered a directorship, that I consented to become a member of the board of the new company. On intimating my resolution to Mr. Harrison, I received a summons to attend the first board meeting at that gentleman's office on the following Wednesday. I presented myself at the appointed hour, and found Mr. Harrison's private office cleared of many of the books and papers which usually encumbered it, and temporarily set out as a board-room, with a long table covered with a green cloth, half a dozen heavy mahogany chairs, and as many virgin blotting-pads, regularly ranged on the table opposite the chairs. Mr. Harrison entered almost immediately, accompanied by three gentlemen, to whom he introduced me with much elaboration, and a great flourish of our names and titular distinctions, repeating them twice over, and dwelling with marked emphasis on Mr. Ralph Abercromby, M.A., of Brasenose College, Oxford. I found that the gentlemen with whom I was about to be associated on the board

of the new company were Captain Barlow, a white-headed, retired naval officer; Colonel Buncombe, a big, burly, military personage, with a bullet head, a bull neck, and a voice like thunder; and Mr. Beasley, a thin, melancholy-looking man, with spiky hair, who, as I afterwards learned, was a leather merchant in Bermondsey.

"Now, gentlemen," said Mr. Harrison, "we will, if you please, proceed to business. Colonel Buncombe, will you kindly take the chair? Have you any objection? None. But still, perhaps it will be better to proceed in the regular manner. I beg to move that Colonel Buncombe do take the chair. Will any one second that?" Captain Barlow seconded it, and the motion was carried unanimously. Colonel Buncombe accordingly took the chair.

"Now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," said Mr. Harrison, "perhaps you will allow me to introduce my nephew, who will act as secretary pro tem., and undertake the duties gratuitously until the formation of the company, when you may see fit to appoint him permanently to the office." There was no objection to this, and Mr. Harrison's nephew was introduced. He was a very tall young man, with an elaborate head of hair, and so well dressed and complete in all his outward appointments as to suggest, either that he was independent and could afford to give his services gratuitously, or that he had unlimited credit and didn't pay his tailor. We now took our seats, and Mr. Harrison, placing himself at the right hand of the chairman, produced a fair sheet of foolscap, and laid it upon the table before him.

"Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," said Mr. Harrison, holding up the fair sheet of paper, and placing his forefinger upon his brow, "this is our scheme at present." Mr. Harrison paused, as if he had made a joke and were waiting for the applause; but all that came was the dry remark of Mr. Beasley, that there was nothing on it.

"Mr. Beasley," said Mr. Harrison, "you are quite right, there is nothing on it at present; but there will be, sir, in time—in time. You are doubtless aware, Mr. Chairman, that I have had great experience in these matters, and that I have brought out many companies, all of which have succeeded, and are now in a flourishing condition—in a flourishing condition." Mr. Harrison always repeated a triumphant climax. "But, sir," he continued, "they have all begun with this—with a fair sheet of paper. I like to call the attention of my directors to the fact as an illustration of what great results from little causes spring. We begin with this blank sheet of paper; we write upon it the name of the company, the amount of the capital, the names of the officers, and the objects. We proceed from this to issue the prospectus, to draw up and settle the deed, to obtain signatures for two-thirds of the capital in accordance with the Act of Parliament, and finally to obtain a certificate of incorporation. Then we are a company, and may proceed to business. This sheet of paper, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, is the seed, the incorporated company, the full-grown tree, which will in due time strike its roots deep into the earth and overshadow the land with its luxuriant branches. Now, sir, it would have been very easy for me to have placed before you a scheme already cut and dried, to have brought you together, so to speak, round a tree of considerable growth; but that is not my system. I do not like to prejudice my directors"—he always called us *his* directors—"in any way. My plan is to let them judge for themselves, and have the whole conduct of their own affairs, ab initio—ab initio." He repeated the Latin, and emphasised it by placing his finger on his nose. "I, therefore, only desire to say, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, that there is a want to be supplied, that there is an ample field for a new life insurance company conducted on sound principles—on sound principles, you will understand—and that the present time is highly favourable for going before the public with a new scheme. Sir, it is proved by statistics that only a very small per-centage of the population is insured, and that there are many quarters of this favoured land where the blessings of insurance have never even been heard of; where the light of the glorious system of providence against death and fire, founded upon mathematical principles about which there can be no dispute, has never penetrated. Therefore, sir, any one who, at the present time, founds a new insurance association, and conducts it upon sound principles, may be regarded as a benefactor of his species. Let us begin, then, with the admitted fact that a new company is a great want. We are met here to take the preliminary steps towards supplying that want. That, I believe, is so?"

Colonel Buncombe nodded assent, and Captain Barlow said, "Yes, yes," with the air of a man fully prepared to agree to anything and everything. "Very well, then," continued Mr. Harrison; "the first thing is the name. Shakespeare says, what's in a name? Now, I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, there is a great deal in a name, especially in the name of an insurance company. What you want is something that will sound familiar to the general ear, and at the same time express stability."

Mr. Beasley suggested "The Rock."

"A very good title, my dear sir," said Mr. Harrison; "but, unfortunately for us, there is already a very excellent association of that name."

Captain Barlow suggested "The Impregnable."

"Most admirable," said Mr. Harrison, "and fitly expressing the character of the association we are about to found; but there, I regret to say, we are also anticipated."

Various other names were suggested, all expressing a firm basis and an unassailable position; but Mr. Harrison's intimate knowledge of the Insurance world enabled him to inform us that they were all in use. It is true that the last result of Mr. Beasley's excogitation, "The Gibraltar," had not been appropriated, but,

though expressing all the impregnability that could be desired in a word, it was considered to be rather far-fetched. In order to expedite our deliberations on this important point, the Insurance Directory was sent for; when, on looking over the alphabetical list, we found that almost every desirable name had already been used.

"In this difficulty," said Mr. Harrison, "there is a very good rule to be guided by. Let our name, whatever it may be, begin with the letter A; for then we shall have the advantage of appearing in the first rank of the published list of companies. That, I can tell you, from long experience, is a matter of considerable importance. If we can stand at the very head of the list, so much the better. Let me see what is the first company in the list. Ah, the Albert! Can any gentleman suggest a name that will stand before the Albert?"

Mr. Beasley suggested the "Acorn."

"Good, very good," said Mr. Harrison; "the Acorn, the seed of the oak, the germ of those wooden walls which have so long guarded our shores from the foot of the invader; an emblem of security, no doubt; but there is, I think, a want of development about it."

Mr. Beasley was good enough to coincide: "there was a want of development about it." Mr. Bosher, the secretary pro tem., in an unguarded moment, suggested "The Accommodation," but withdrew it at once, and seemed to be sorry he had spoken. The colonel then, wildly, advanced the merits of "Abecedarian," but that, though admitted to stand second to none in an alphabetical point of view, was also, on calm reflection, rejected. At this period of extreme embarrassment, Mr. Harrison laid his finger emphatically on his nose, and exclaimed, "The Adamant." We all, with one assenting and delighted voice, repeated "The Adamant." "The Adamant is your title against the world," said Mr. Harrison. We admitted it, and Mr. Harrison took a pen and wrote, at the head of the blank sheet of foolscap, "The Adamant."

"Now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," he continued, "having once made a beginning, it is comparatively easy to go on. We come next to the capital. How much shall it be? If you will allow me to advise, I would say not less than one million sterling. Have you any objection to one million sterling?" We had no objection, and Mr. Harrison wrote, "Capital one million sterling."

"The next thing," said Mr. Harrison, "is the prospectus. Now, sir, I have no desire to dictate to my directors, or to interfere with their legitimate functions; at the same time you will, perhaps, permit me to submit for your consideration the draft of a prospectus which I have already prepared." Leave being granted, Mr. Harrison proceeded to read his draft. It was a most flowery production, recommending the Adamant (the name of which Mr. Harrison filled in as he went on) to the notice of the public as an institution combining the utmost security with the most advantageous and easy terms for the shareholders and insurers. The great success that had attended other offices which did not profess to offer such advantages, was pointed out: the obvious inference being that The Adamant could not fail to prove more successful than any of them. The Adamant was specially designed to meet the wants and requirements of the working classes, and, in conclusion, it was mentioned that in anticipation of the great and wide-spread operations of the company, branches of The Adamant would be forthwith established in all the principal towns of the United Kingdom, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in Australasia. After receiving some verbal alterations, with a view to grammar, suggested by Ralph Abercromby, Esq., M.A., of Brasenose College, Oxford, who was glad of an opportunity of showing that he was not entirely ignorant of insurance matters, the prospectus was adopted, and Mr. Harrison triumphantly announced that The Adamant Assurance Association was formed, and had existence from that moment.

"You perceive, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," he said, "what this sheet of paper, which an hour ago was blank and not worth a halfpenny, has now become. Here we have the name of the company, its objects, a capital of one million sterling, and a board of directors to carry on the business."

After this we met regularly every Wednesday to take measures for bringing the company into operation. These measures were taken in due course, and they amounted to this: Mr. Harrison's nephew, Mr. Bosher, was appointed secretary at a salary of three hundred pounds per annum; Colonel Buncombe's son was appointed accountant at one hundred and fifty pounds a year to begin with; the lower part of Captain Barlow's house, in a leading thoroughfare, was taken for offices at a rent of one hundred and twenty pounds (which I subsequently discovered enabled the captain to live rent free); a brother-in-law of Mr. Harrison's was appointed actuary; another relation was appointed superintendent of agents at a salary and commission; and an arrangement was entered into, whereby Mr. Harrison was to be paid two thousand pounds as promoter when the company floated. Further, Mr. Harrison had obtained the consent of two gentlemen of distinction, the one a baronet and the other an admiral, to give their names as trustees —on the distinct understanding, however, that they should have no responsibility. Finally, Mr. Harrison had achieved the great triumph of inducing Lord Churchmouse to join the board. Nothing now remained but to comply with the requirements of the Act of Parliament. All had gone so smoothly hitherto, that I thought it would have been the easiest matter imaginable to comply with the Act of Parliament. But that part of the business proved by no means so easy as I had supposed; for what the Act of Parliament required was, that two-thirds of the capital should be subscribed for, before the company could be incorporated and licensed to carry on business.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Harrison, "it is highly necessary that you should put your shoulders to the wheel and obtain shareholders."

We did put our shoulders to the wheel, each in his own circle, but with very small success. Notwithstanding the immense capital of The Adamant, as set forth in the prospectus, and the distinguished names of the trustees and directors, our friends and the public were blindly indifferent to the advantages of becoming shareholders in the new association, and were not to be induced to append their signatures to the deed. In this emergency, Mr. Harrison came to the rescue, and impressed us all with a sense of his superior influence and experience by obtaining the required signatures in the course of a few days. Mr. Harrison's peculiar eloquence and powers of persuasion had more force than the million of capital and all our influential names put together. At his solicitation, a stationer, two printers, an upholsterer, a builder, and an advertising agent, all signed their names for a hundred shares each: on the understanding, as I subsequently learned, that they were to be employed by the company, and that the price of their shares should be put against their accounts. The Act of Parliament was complied with, the corporate seal was brought to the office in a mahogany box, and The Adamant Assurance Association began business.

Our secretary, Mr. Bosher, seemed to be a most active and energetic officer. He was constantly stirring up the agents, and almost every board-day he had from thirty to forty proposals of insurance to lay before us. And we appeared to be extremely fortunate in the nature of the business offered to us. All the lives, on examination by our medical officers, were found to be good, first-class in fact, and consequently we had nothing to do but accept the proposals and grant the policies. We, the directors, endeavoured to second the efforts of the secretary by canvassing our own connexions. We insured our own lives, and induced all within the sphere of our influence to insure *their* lives. I, for my part, brought up an uncle, two college chums just beginning life, my tailor, a tobacconist, and a livery-stable keeper, all of whom insured for a hundred, just to oblige me. We were getting on like a house on fire. One day, Mr. Bosher announced that the amount insured in The Adamant was close upon a hundred thousand pounds. We sent for two bottles of sherry on the strength of it, and, after the board, sat round the fire and discussed the sherry and our brilliant prospects. Everything looked bright and promising; our policies were accumulating at a rapid rate; and our shares, though they did not appear to go off very quickly, were quoted at two and a half premium. At the very next board meeting, Mr. Harrison asked for his bill of costs, including his promoter's fee, amounting in all to two thousand five hundred pounds. When the chairman read out the entry from the agenda-book, there was a dead pause for a few minutes. It was Mr. Beasley who spoke at length. Mr. Beasley thought the sum rather a large sum. Mr. Harrison immediately put on an injured look, and handed in his bill duly made out, and appealed to Lord Churchmouse if five hundred pounds, in addition to his fee as a promoter, could be called excessive? Lord Churchmouse said he had had great experience of such matters, and he had known the solicitor's bill to be double, and even treble that amount. So far, then, from considering the charge excessive, he thought it exceedingly moderate. Mr. Beasley then appealed to Mr. Harrison to let his claim stand over, until the company should be in a better position. Mr. Harrison protested that the position of the company, considering the short time it had been in existence, was unparalleled, and that it would be nothing short of base ingratitude to refuse him the just reward of his labours. I was strongly disposed to take Mr. Beasley's view of the case; but as the chairman, Lord Churchmouse, and Captain Barlow, were inclined to support Mr. Harrison, we were obliged to give way, and the claim was allowed, and a cheque given for the amount there and then. Cheques were also voted to Captain Barlow for the rent of his premises, and to the secretary, the accountant, and the others, in respect of their salaries.

We did not have so much of Mr. Harrison's company after this; but, under the energetic management of Mr. Bosher, proposals continued to pour in rapidly, and we appeared to be prospering greatly. One day, however, when some rather heavy cheques had been voted for printing, advertising, and stationery, Mr. Beasley rose to ask a question. He wanted to know more precisely what was the exact position of the company? Mr. Bosher assured him that it was in a most flourishing condition; that a great portion of the capital had been taken up; that the policies of the company amounted to considerably more than a hundred thousand pounds; and that the income was rapidly increasing. Lord Churchmouse thought the statement most satisfactory; but Mr. Beasley was not so easily assured. He wanted to know what were the actual monetary resources of the company? "In fact," said Mr. Beasley, "I want to know how much we have to our account?" Mr. Bosher replied that, at a rough guess, he thought about ten thousand pounds. Would Mr. Bosher have any objection to produce the bank-book? Mr. Bosher evidently had some slight objection, for he turned rather red in the face, and hesitated. Mr. Beasley, however, insisted, and the book was produced; and, on examination, it was found that our account amounted to exactly fifteen hundred pounds. Mr. Bosher hurried to explain that many of the shareholders had not yet paid their deposits, but that they were good and true men, and might be depended on; and that a large amount of the premiums were still in the hands of the agents, who were also good and true men, and would all pay up in due course.

"Well," said Mr. Beasley, "it appears to

me that we are sitting on a barrel of gunpowder."

"My dear Mr. Beasley," said Lord Churchmouse, "you must really excuse me if I say that you have had very little experience of these matters. There is no danger, I assure you, in sitting on a barrel of gunpowder, if there is no fire in the vicinity. I assure you, sir, I have sat upon many barrels of gunpowder, and not one of them has ever exploded yet."

"But suppose one or two deaths were to occur among our policy-holders," said Mr. Beasley.

"A most unlikely thing," said Lord Churchmouse. "Our lives are all first-class, and we have been in operation a very short time; nobody has had time to die, my dear sir. I am sure our actuary will bear me out in what I say, that there is an ascertained rule in these matters."

The actuary bore his lordship out in what he said—there *was* an ascertained rule in these matters, and it would be contrary to that rule for any of our policy-holders to die for some considerable time. And his lordship, to reassure Mr. Beasley, told several pleasant stories of insurance companies that had tided over difficulties in a most remarkable manner. One in particular, of which he had some knowledge, though he had never been personally connected with it, had lived for the first year of its existence by ordering suites of furniture for the office and selling them as soon as they came in. His lordship had no hesitation in saying that that was a swindle; but the office floated at last, and was now one of the most solid and respectable companies in London. Mr. Beasley was silenced, but not satisfied. He expressed to me in private, great uneasiness at the position of the company, and the heavy responsibility which rested on us. We both talked of resigning; but on due consideration, it appeared to us to be our duty to stick to the ship, and do our best to prevent her from sinking. Mr. Bosher became more assuring every week, and one board-day he met us in high exultation, and with a smile of triumph on his face. "Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," he said, "I have to congratulate you; one of our policy-holders is dead." Mr. Beasley turned quite pale.

"Mr. Bosher," he said, "this is not a subject for joking."

"My dear sir," said Mr. Bosher, "I had not the slightest intention to joke: but really this is the best thing that could have happened to us at the present moment. The deceased Mr. Wilkins's policy is only for a hundred pounds; we shall pay at once, and that will encourage the others. You will see, we shall have a rush of business from Mr. Wilkins's neighbourhood immediately. Our greatest drawback hitherto, has been, that we have had no deaths among our policy-holders." Lord Churchmouse endorsed all Mr. Bosher said, in the most cheerful manner, and the cheque for the family of the deceased Mr. Wilkins was despatched at the earliest moment. What might have been the effect of that prompt payment upon Mr. Wilkins's neighbourhood we were not permitted to know. At the very next board-meeting Mr. Bosher had to announce the death of Mr. Jopling, who was insured with us for one thousand pounds. Mr. Bosher was not exultant now. The deposits on the capital had not yet been paid, the accounts in the hands of the agents still remained out, and we had little more than a thousand pounds in the bank. Lord Churchmouse proposed that we should at once make a call upon the shareholders; but this was opposed by Mr. Bosher, on the ground that it would tend to shake the confidence of the market, and interfere with the progress of business. Mr. Beasley then proposed that each of the directors should put down two hundred pounds to meet the emergency, and that steps should be immediately taken to transfer the business. Lord Churchmouse objected. He did not see why the directors should bear all the burden. We had the power to make a call, and would be perfectly justified in exercising it. Mr. Harrison, who had been sent for post-haste, arrived in the midst of our discussion, and calmed us with the assurance that there was no occasion for alarm.

"Mr. Chairman and gentlemen," he said, "from information which I have just received, I find that this is a matter you may safely leave in the hands of your solicitor." On being asked for an explanation, Mr. Harrison informed us that he had learned on good authority that Jopling had made false representations, and that, at the time he signed the declaration as to his health, he was suffering from delirium tremens.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Harrison, "my advice to you is, dispute the claim."

We were all averse to this at first; but on receiving satisfactory primâ facie evidence that Jopling had really deceived us, we placed the matter in the hands of Mr. Harrison. Mr. Harrison disputed the claim, and the executors of Mr. Jopling immediately commenced an action against us. There were a great many preliminary legal skirmishes, offering, at times, some hope of a compromise; but it came to a grand pitched battle at last, and The Adamant Assurance Association got the worst of it. It was not simply that the verdict was against us with heavy costs, but the counsel for the executors, in a telling speech, covered us with ridicule and scorn, and even went the length of stigmatising our company as a swindle. Mr. Beasley returned from the trial crying like a child, declaring that he was a ruined man, and cursing the day on which he had been induced to become a director of an insurance company. The evil tidings spread fast. The very next morning the amalgamators were swarming about the doors of The Adamant, like sharks round a sinking ship. Bills fairly rained upon us, most of them with threats of process if the amounts were not discharged forthwith. The Adamant was panic-stricken. The secretary was taken in satisfaction of a debt to his tailor, the direc-

tors were at their wits' end, and within a week The Adamant was in Chancery, a candidate for winding up. The Vice-Chancellor took his time over the process; but he wound us up pretty tightly at last. Had each of the shareholders borne his fair share of the debts, it would not have pressed very severely upon any one; but the great majority of them were men of straw, and the Vice-Chancellor does not trouble himself about phantoms. He came down upon those who had means, or reputation, and the burden fell, very properly, upon the directors and certain tradesmen who had signed their names for shares as a means of forwarding their own business. Happily for the peace of mind of such of us as felt the responsibility of our position, the policy-holders came to no harm. In the confusion of the break-up, a clerk *borrowed* the policy-book and transferred the business of The Adamant to another office.

AN EASTER REVIVAL.

A PLEASANT place, the Fenchurch-street Railway Station, to a person who knows at which of the numerous pigeon-holes he should apply for his ticket, and who does not mind running the chance of being sent to Margate when his destination is Kew. A pleasant place for a person without corns, who is, what grooms say of horses, "well ribbed up," and whose sides are impervious to elbow pressure: who is complacent in the matter of being made the resting-place for bundles in white-spotted blue cotton pocket-handkerchiefs, who is undisturbed by squirted tobacco-juice, who likes the society of drunken sailors, Jew crimps, and a baby-bearing population guiltless of the wash-tub. It has its drawbacks, the Fenchurch-street Railway station, but, for that matter, so has Pall Mall. It was crammed last Easter Monday—so crammed that I had literally to fight my way up to the pay-place, above which was the inscription, "Tickets for the Woodford line," and when I had reached the counter, after many manifestations of personal strength and activity, it was disappointing to receive a ticket for a hitherto unheard-of locality called Barking, and to be severely told that I could not book to Woodford for twenty minutes. I retired for a quarter of an hour into the shadow of one of the pillars supporting the waiting-hall, and listened to the dialogue of two old farmers who were patiently waiting their turn. "A lot of 'em!" said one, a tall old man with brown body-coat, knee-cords, and top-boots, having at his feet a trifle of luggage in the shape of a sack of corn, an old saddle, and a horse-collar. "A lot of 'em! all a pleasurin' excursionin', I s'pose!" "Ah!" said the other, a wizen dirty-faced little fellow in a long drab great-coat reaching to his heels, "it were different when we was young, warn't it, Maister Walker? It was all fairs then!" "Stattys!" said the first old boy, as though half in correction; "there were Waltham Statty, and Leyton Statty, and Harpenden Statty, and the gathering of the beastes at Cheshunt, and that like!" And then the two old fellows interchanged snuff-boxes and shook their heads in silent lamentation over the decadence of the times. The twenty minutes wore away, the Barking people disappeared slowly, filtering one by one through the smallest crack of a half-opened door, and a stout policeman, shouting, "Now for the Woodford line!" heralded us to the glories of martyrdom through the same mysterious outlet.

What took me out of town last Easter Monday? Not a search for fresh air; there was plenty of that in London, blowing very fresh indeed, and rasping your nose, ears, and chin, and other uncovered portions of your anatomy, filling your eyes and mouth with sharp stinging particles of dust, and cutting you to the very marrow, whenever you attempted to strike out across an open space. Not an intention to see the country, which was then blank furrow and bare sticks, where in a couple of months would be smiling crops and greenery; not with any view of taking pedestrian exercise, which I abominate; not to join in any volunteer evolutions; not to visit any friends; simply to see the "revival of the glorious Epping Hunt" which was advertised to take place at Buckhurst Hill, and to witness the uncarting of the deer before the Roebuck Inn.

We were not a very sporting "lot" in the railway carriage into which I forced an easy way. There were convivialists in the third and second classes (dressed for the most part in rusty black, carrying palpable stone-bottles, which lay against their breast-bones under their waistcoats, and only protruded their black-corked necks), who were going "to the Forest," and who must have enjoyed that umbrageous retreat on one of the bitterest days in March; but we had no nonsense of that kind in my first-class bower. There was a very nice young man opposite me, in a long great-coat, a white cravat, and spectacles, which were much disturbed in their fit by the presence of a large mole exactly on the root of his nose between his eyebrows, upon which the glasses rode slantingly, and gave him a comic, not to say inebriated, look: a curate, apparently, by the way in which he talked of the schools, and the clubs, and the visitings, and the services, to the old lady whom he was escorting; a clean, wholesome-looking old lady enough, but obviously not strong in conversation, as she said nothing the whole journey but, with a sigh of great admiration, "Ah! Mr. Parkins!" and rubbed her hands slowly over a black and white basket, like a wicker draught-board. Then there were two City gentlemen, who had "left early," as they called it, and were going to make holiday in digging their gardens, who, after languidly discussing whether the reduction in the Budget would be on insurance or income, waxed warm in an argument on the right of way through Grunter's Grounds. And next to me there was a young lady, who, from the colour and texture of a bit of flesh between the end of her puce-coloured skeepskin glove and the top of her

worked cuff, I judged to be in domestic service, but who had on a round hat with a white feather, a black silk cloak, a scarlet petticoat, and a crinoline, which fitted her much in the same way that the "Green" fits Jack on the first of May. We dropped this young lady at Snaresbrook, where she was received by a young man with a larger amount of chin than is usually bestowed on one individual; the two City men got out at Woodford, with the Grunter's Grounds question still hot in dispute; and at Buckhurst Hill I left the curate and the old lady sole occupants of the carriage.

There was no difficulty in finding the way to the scene of the sports, for the neighbourhood was alive, and crowds were ascending the hill. Not very nice crowds either, rather of the stamp which is seen toiling up Skinner-street on execution mornings, or which, on Easter Mondays, fifteen years ago, patronised Chalk Farm Fair. Close-fitting caps pulled down over the eyes, with hanks of hair curling out from underneath, no shirt collars, wisps of cotton neckcloths, greasy shiny clothes, thick boots, and big sticks, characterised the male visitors: while the ladies were remarkably free in their behaviour. The resident population evidently did not like us; all the houses were tight closed, and the residents glared at us hatefully out of their windows, and received with scornful looks our derisive remarks. A prolific neighbourhood, Buckhurst Hill, whither the moral and cheerful doctrines of the late Mr. Malthus have apparently not penetrated, as there was no window without a baby, and there were many with three; a new neighbourhood, very much stuccoed, and plate-glassed, and gable-ended, like the outskirts of a sea-side watering-place; very new in its shops, where the baker combined corn-chandlery and life-assurance agency—the greengrocer had a small coal and wood and coke tendency—and where you might be morally certain that under the shadow of the chemist's bottles and plaster of Paris horse, lurked bad light-brown cigars. On Buckhurst Hill one first became aware of the sporting element in the neighbourhood by the presence of those singular specimens of horse-flesh which hitherto had been only associated in my mind with Hampstead and Blackheath, wretched wobegone specimens, with shaggy coats, broken knees, and a peculiar lacklustreness of eye, and which got pounded along at a great pace, urged by their riders, who generally sat upon their necks with curled knees, after the fashion of the monkeys in the circus steeple-chase.

When we got to the top of the hill, we emerged upon the main road, and joined the company, who, possessing their own vehicles, had disdained the use of the railway. The most popular conveyance I found to be that build of cart which takes the name of "Whitechapel," from the fashionable neighbourhood where it is most in vogue; but there were also many four-wheeled chaises, so crammed with occupants as to merit the appellation of "cruelty-vans," constantly bestowed upon them by the light-hearted mob; there were pleasure-vans filled with men, women, and children; a few cabs, and a large number of those low flat trucks, which look as if a drawer in a conchologist's cabinet had been cleared out, put upon wheels, and had a shambling pony or depressed donkey harnessed to it, and which, I believe, are technically known as "flying bedsteads." The dust raised by these vehicles, and by a very large pedestrian crowd, was overwhelming; the noise caused by the traffic and by the shouting of the many-headed was terrific; and the thought of an early lunch in some secluded corner of the Roebuck (a tavern whence the hunt starts, and which has for many years enjoyed an excellent reputation), was my only source of comfort. A few minutes' walk brought me to an extemporised fair, with gingerbread stalls, nut-shooting targets, and two or three cake stands, with long funnels projecting from them like gigantic post-horns: which I found from their inscriptions were, "Queen Victoria's own Rifle Gallery," "The British Volunteers' Range—Defence not Defiance—Try a Shot;" and beyond this fair lay the Roebuck, charmingly quaint, and clean, and gable-ended, and purple-fronted.

The crowd round the door was rather thick, and it was with some difficulty that I edged my way over the threshold, and then I came upon a scene. What should have been the space in front of the bar, a passage leading through into a railed court-yard joining upon the garden, some stairs leading to the upper rooms, and a side-room, the parlour of the place, were all completely choked with visitors. And such visitors! The London rough is tolerably well known to me; I have seen him in his own peculiar territories in the neighbourhood of Drury-lane and Shadwell; I have met him at executions and prize-fights; I have been in his company during the public illuminations; but I never saw such specimens as had taken indisputable possession of the Roebuck Inn, nor did I ever elsewhere hear such language. All ages were represented here—the big burly rough with the receding forehead, the massive jaw, and the deep-set restless eye; and the old young boy, the "gonoph," whose oaths were as full flavoured as those of the men, and, coming from such childish lips, sounded infinitely more terrible; brazen girls flaunting in twopenny finery; and battered women bearing weazened children in their arms. Approach to the bar-counter was only possible after determined and brisk struggles, and loud and fierce were the altercations as to the prices charged, and the attempts at evading payment. I could not get out of the house by the door at which I had entered, as the crowd behind was gradually forcing me forward, and I had made up my mind to allow myself to drift through with the mob, when I heard a cry of "Clear the road!" and, amid a great shouting and laughing, I saw a gang of some thirty ruffians in line, each holding on to the collar of the man in front of him, make a rush from the back door to the front, pushing aside or knocking down all who stood in the way.

Being tall and tolerably strong, I managed to get my back against a wall, and to keep it there, while these Mohocks swept past; but the people round me were knocked over like ninepins. This wave of humanity ebbed in due course, and carried me out with it into the garden, where I found a wretched brass band playing a polka, and some most atrocious-looking scoundrels grotesquely dancing in couples to the music.

I got out through the garden to the stables, and thence round again to the front, where I found an access of company, all pretty much of the same stamp. I was pushing my way through them when I heard my name pronounced, and looking round saw an old acquaintance. Most Londoners know the appearance of the King of the Cabmen: a sovereign whose throne is a Hansom driving-box, and whose crown is the curliest-brimmed of "down the road" hats. I have for many years enjoyed the privilege of this monarch's acquaintance, and have, in bygone days, been driven by him to the Derby, when he has shown a capital appreciation in the matter of dry sherry as a preferable drink to sweet champagne, and once confidentially informed me — in reference to his declining a remnant of raised pie — that "all the patties in the world was nothing to a cold knuckle of lamb." The monarch couldn't quite make out my presence on Buckhurst Hill (he was evidently there as a patron of the sport), but he struck his nose with his forefinger, and said mysteriously, "Lookin' after 'em, sir?" I nodded, and said "Yes," upon which he winked affably, declared, without reference to anything in particular, that "he wasn't licked yet, and wouldn't be for ten year," and made his way in the direction of the tap.

The aspect of the day now settled down into a slate-coloured gloom, and a bitter east wind came driving over the exposed space in front of the Roebuck where the crowd stood. Hitherto there had not been the slightest sign of any start, but now some half-dozen roughish men on long-haired cobs, ill-built clumsy creatures, without the ghost of a leap in any of them, were moving hither and thither; and in the course of half an hour the old huntsman, mounted on a wretched chesnut screw, blowing a straight bugle, and followed by four couple and a half of harriers, made his way through the crowd and entered the inn-yard. After another half-hour, we had another excitement in the arrival of a tax-cart containing something which looked like the top of a tester-bed in a servant's attic, but under which was reported to be the stag; and the delight of the populace manifested itself in short jumps and attempted peepings under the mysterious cover. Then we flagged again, and the mob, left to itself, had to fall back on its own practical humour, and derived great delight from the proceedings of a drunken person in a tall hat, who butted all his neighbours in the stomach—and from a game at foot-ball which had the advantage of enabling the players to knock down everybody, men, women, and children, near to whom the ball was kicked. At length even these delights began to pall; the start had been advertised for two o'clock; it was already three; and discontent was becoming general, when a genius hit upon the notion of setting fire to the lovely bright yellow furze with which the heath was covered, and which was just coming into blossom. No sooner thought of, than accomplished! Not in one place but in half a dozen; smoke rose, crackling was heard, and in a few minutes in place of the pretty flower was a charred and blackened heap. This was a tremendous success, and the mob, though half stifled by the smoke and half singed by the flame which leapt fiercely from bush to bush under the influence of the wind, and roared and crackled lustily, remained thoroughly delighted, until the crowd of mounted sportsmen had much increased, and the deer-containing cart was seen to be on the move.

Bumping and jolting over the rugged ground, the cart was brought to the bottom of a small hill, and shouts arose that a space should be cleared into which the deer could be uncarted. But this phase of your British public does not like a clear space; it likes to be close to what it wants to see; and the consequence was that the crowd clustered round within four feet of the cart, and steadfastly refused to go back another inch. The persons who managed the business seemed to object; but, as all remonstrance was futile, they took off the top of the tester-bed, and a light-brown deer, without any horns, and looking exceedingly frightened, bounded out of the cart, took two short side jumps, amid the roar of a thousand voices, leaped some palings into an adjacent garden, and then started off across country at a splitting pace. The horsemen did not attempt to follow, but struck off, some to the right and some to the left, to find an easy way into the fields, and the pedestrians climbed on walls, and gave a thousand contrary opinions as to where "she" had gone. The dogs I never saw, nor did I see any further traces of the mounted field, nor of the stag, nor of the huntsman, nor did I find any one who had. No sooner was the stag off, than the people began to return home, and I followed their example: convinced that of the numerous silly "revivals" of which we have heard of late, this attempt to resuscitate the Epping Hunt is one of the least required and the most absurd.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER IX. ON THE ROAD.

Calvert's first care as he entered his room was to ascertain if his purse was there. It was all safe, and untouched. He next lit a cigar, and, opening his window, leaned out to smoke. It was a glorious autumn night, still, starry, and cloudless. Had any one from the street beneath seen him there, he might have said, "There is some wearied man of brain-labour, taking his hour of tranquil thought before he betakes himself to rest; or he is one of those contempla-

tive natures who loves to be free to commune with his own heart in the silence of a calm night." He looked like this, and perhaps—who knows if he were not nearer it than we wot of.

It was nigh daybreak before he lay down to sleep. Nor had he been fully an hour in slumber when he was awoke, and found Barnard, dressed in a morning gown and slippers, standing beside his bed.

"I say, Calvert, rub your eyes and listen to me. Are you awake?"

"Not very perfectly; but quite enough for anything you can have to say. What is it?"

"I am so fretted about that money."

"Why, you told me that last night," said Calvert, addressing himself, as it were, again to sleep.

"Oh, it's all very fine and very philosophic to be indifferent about another man's 'tin;' but I tell you I don't know what to do, what to say, about it. I'm not six weeks married, and it's rather early to come to rows and altercations with a father-in-law."

"Address him to me. Say, 'Go to Calvert—he'll talk to you.' Do that, like a good fellow, and go to bed. Good night."

"I'll not stand this sort of thing, Calvert. I'm not going to lose my money and be laughed at too!"

"You'll not stand what?" cried Calvert, sitting up in bed, and looking now thoroughly awake.

"I mean," said the other, doggedly, "you have got me into a confounded scrape, and you are bound to get me out of it."

"That is speaking like a man of sense. It is what I intend to do; but can't we sleep over it first. I want what the old ladies call my 'natural rest.'"

"There's no time for that. The old governor is always pottering about by six o'clock, and it's just as likely, as the landlord talks English, he'll be down by way of gossiping with him, and ask if the bill is settled."

"What an old beast he must be. I wonder you could have married into such a vulgar set."

"If you have nothing to say but abuse of my connexions, I am not going to waste any more time here."

"There, that's a dear fellow; go to bed now, and call me somewhere towards four in the afternoon."

"This is rather more than a joke."

"To be sure it is, man; it is dead sleepiness. Good night."

"I see you have found your purse—how much had you in it?"

"Count it, if you're curious," said Calvert, drowsily.

"Fifty-four Napoleons and a half," said the other, slowly. "Look ye, Calvert, I'm going to impound this. It's a sorry instalment, but, as far as it goes——"

"Take it, old fellow, and leave me quiet."

"One word more, Calvert," said Barnard, seriously. "I cannot muster courage to meet old Rep this morning, and if you like to start at once and settle this affair you have in Switzerland, I'm ready; but it must be done instanter."

"All right; I shall be ready within an hour. Tell the porter to send my bath up at once, and order coffee by the time you'll be dressed."

There was very little trace of sleep about Calvert's face now, as, springing from his bed, he prepared for the road. With such despatch, indeed, did he proceed, that he was already in the coffee-room before his friend had descended.

"Shall we say anything to the landlord before we start, Calvert," whispered he.

"Of course; send Signor Angelo, or Antonio, or whatever his name, here. The padrone, I mean," said he to the waiter.

"He is called Luigi Filippo, sir," said the man, indignantly.

"A capital name for a rogue. Let us have him here."

A very burly consequential sort of man, marvellously got up as to beard, moustaches, and watch-chain, entered and bowed.

"Signor Luigi Filippo," said Calvert, "my friend here—the son of that immensely wealthy mi Lordo up-stairs—is in a bit of a scrape; he had an altercation last night with a fellow we take to be an Austrian spy."

The host spat out, and frowned ferociously.

"Just so; a dog of a Croat, I suspect," went on Calvert; "at all events, he must put a bullet in him, and to do so, must get over the frontier beyond Como; we want, therefore, a little money from you, and your secresy, till this blows over."

The host bowed, and pursed up his lips like one who would like a little time for reflection, and at last said, "How much money, signor?"

"What do you say, Bob; will a hundred Naps do, or eighty?"

"Fifty; fifty are quite enough," cried Barnard.

"On a circular note, of course, signor?" asked the host.

"No, a draft at six days on my friend's father; mi Lordo means to pass a month here."

"I don't think I'll do that, Calvert," whispered Barnard; but the other stopped him at once, with, "Be quiet; leave this to me."

"Though payable at sight, Signor Luigi, we shall ask you to hold it over for five or six days, because we hope possibly to be back here before Saturday, and if so, we'll settle this ourselves."

"It shall be done, gentlemen," said the host. "I'll go and draw out the bills, and you shall have the money immediately."

"How I touched the fellow's patriotism, Bob. It was the Austrian dodge stood us in stead, there. I know that I have jeopardised your esteem for me by the loss of that money last night; but do confess that this was a clever hit of mine."

"It's a bad business from beginning to end!" was, however, all that he could obtain from Barnard.

"Narrow-minded dog! he won't see any genius in the man that owes him five shillings."

"I wish it was only five shillings."

"What an ignoble confession! It means this, that your friendship depends on the rate of the exchanges, and that when gold rises—— But here comes Luigi Filippo. Now, no squeamishness, but write your name firmly. 'Cut boldly,' said the auger, 'and he cut it through.' Don't you remember that classic anecdote in your Roman history?"

It is a strange fact that the spirit of raillery, which, to a dull man, is, at first, but a source of irritation and fretfulness, will, when persevered in, become, at last, one of the most complete despotisms. He dreads it as a weapon which he cannot defend himself against; and he comes to regard it as an evidence of superiority and power. Barnard saw the domination that the other exercised over him, but could not resist it.

"Where to now?" asked he, as they whirled rapidly along the road towards Monza.

"First of all, to Orta. There is an English family I want to see. Two prettier girls you can't imagine—not that the news has any interest for you, poor caged mouse that you are—but I am in love with one of them. I forget which, but I believe it is the one that won't have me."

"She's right," said Barnard, with a half smile.

"Well, I half suspect she is. I could be a charming lover, but I fear I'd make only a sorry husband. My qualities are too brilliant for every-day use. It is your dreary fellows, with a tiresome monotony of nature, do best in that melancholy mill they call marriage. You, for instance, ought to be a model 'mari.'"

"You are not disposed to give me the chance, I think," said Barnard, peevishly.

"On the contrary, I am preparing you most carefully for your career. Conjugal life is a reformatory. You must come to it as a penitent. Now, I'll teach you the first part of your lesson; your wife shall supply the second."

"I'd relish this much better if——"

"I had not lost that money, you were going to say. Out with it, man. When a fellow chances upon a witty thing, he has a right to repeat it; besides, you have reason on your side. A loser is always wrong. But, after all, Bob, whether the game be war, or marriage, or a horse-race, one's skill has very little to say to it. Make the wisest combinations that ever were fashioned, and you'll lose sometimes. Draw your card at hazard, and you'll win. If you only saw the fellow that beat me t'other day in a girl's affections—as dreary a dog as ever you met in your life, without manliness, without 'go' in him—and yet he wasn't a curate. I know you suspect he was a curate."

"If you come through this affair all right, what do you intend to turn to, Calvert?" said the other, who really felt a sort of interest in his fortunes.

"I have thought of several things: the Church—the Colonies—Patent Fuel—Marriage—Turkish Baths, and a Sympathy Society for Suffering Nationalities, with a limited liability to all who subscribe fifty pounds and upwards."

"But, seriously, have you any plans?"

"Ten thousand plans! I have plans enough to ruin all Threadneedle-street; but what use are plans? What's the good of an architect in a land where there are no bricks, no mortar, and no timber? When I've shot Graham, I've a plan how to make my escape out of Switzerland; but, beyond that, nothing; not one step, I promise you. See yonder is Monte Rosa; how grand he looks in the still calm air of the morning. What a gentleman a mountain is; how independent of the changeful fortunes of the plains, where grass succeeds tillage, and what is barley to-day, may be a brick-field to-morrow; but the mountain is ever the same—proud and cold if you will, but standing above all the accidents of condition, and asserting itself by qualities which are not money-getting. I'd like to live in a land of mountains, if it were not for the snobs that come to climb them."

"But why should they be snobs?"

"I don't know; perhaps the mountains like it. There, look yonder, our road leads along that ledge till we reach Chiasso, about twelve miles off; do you think you can last that long without breakfast? There, there, don't make that pitiful face; you shall have your beefsteak, and your chocolate, and your eggs, and all the other claims of your Anglo-Saxon nature, whose birthright it is to growl for every twenty-four hours, and 'grub' every two."

They gained the little inn at Orta by the evening, and learned, as Calvert expected, that nothing had changed in his absence—indeed, what was there to change—so long as the family at the villa remained in the cottage. All was to Calvert as he left it.

Apologising to his friend for a brief absence, he took boat and crossed the lake. It was just as they had sat down to tea that he entered the drawing-room.

If there was some constraint in the reception of him, there was that amount of surprise at his appearance that half masked it. "You have been away, Mr. Calvert?" asked Miss Grainger.

"Yes," said he, carelessly, "I got a rambling fit on me, and finding that Loyd had started for England, I grew fidgety at being alone, so I went up to Milan, saw churches and galleries, and the last act of a ballet; but, like a country mouse, got home-sick for the hard peas and the hollow tree, and hurried back again."

After some careless talk of common-places, he managed at last to secure the chair beside Florence's sofa, and affected to take an interest in some work she was engaged at. "I have been anxious to see you, and speak to you, Florry," said he, in a low tone, not audible by the others. "I had a letter from Loyd, written just before he left. He has told me everything."

She only bent down her head more deeply over her work, but did not speak.

"Yes; he was more candid than you," continued he. "He said you were engaged—that

is—that you had owned to him that you liked him, and that when the consent he hoped for would be obtained, you would be married."

"How came he to write this to *you?*" said she, with a slight tremor in her voice.

"In this wise," said he, calmly. "He felt that he owed me an apology for something that had occurred between us on that morning; and, when making his excuses, he deemed he could give no better proof of frankness than by this avowal. It was, besides, an act of fairness towards one who, trusting to his own false light, might have been lured to delusive hopes."

"Perhaps so," said she, coldly.

"It was very right of him, very proper."

She nodded.

"It was more—it was generous."

"He *is* generous," said she, warmly.

"He had need be."

"How do you mean, that he had need be?" asked she, eagerly.

"I mean this—that he will require every gift he has, and every grace, to outbalance the affection which I bear you, and which I shall never cease to bear you. You prefer him. Now, you may regard me how you will—I will not consent to believe myself beaten. Yes, Florence, I know not only that I love you more than he does, but I love you with a love he is incapable of feeling. I do not wish to say one word in his dispraise, least of all to you, in whose favour I want to stand well; but I wish you—and it is no unfair request—to prove the affection of the two men who solicit your love."

"I am satisfied with his."

"You may be satisfied with the version your own imagination renders of it. You may be satisfied with the picture you have coloured for yourself; but I want you to be just to yourself, and just to me. Now, if I can show you in his own handwriting—the ink only dried on the paper a day ago—a letter from him to me, in which he asks my pardon in terms so abject as never were wrung from any man, except under the pressure of a personal fear?"

"You say this to outrage me. Aunt Grainger," cried she, in a voice almost a scream, "listen to what this gentleman has had the temerity to tell me. Repeat it now, sir, if you dare."

"What is this, Mr. Calvert. You have not surely presumed——"

"I have simply presumed, madam, to place my pretensions in rivalry with Mr. Loyd's. I have been offering to your niece the half of a very humble fortune, with a name not altogether ignoble."

"Oh dear, Mr. Calvert!" cried the old lady, "I never suspected this. I'm sure my niece is aware of the great honour we all feel—at least I do most sensibly—that, if she was not already engaged——Are you ill, dearest? Oh, she has fainted. Leave us, Mr. Calvert. Send Maria here. Milly, some water immediately."

For more than an hour Calvert walked the little grass-plot before the door, and no tidings came to him from those within. To a momentary bustle and confusion, a calm succeeded—lights flitted here and there through the cottage. He fancied he heard something like sobbing, and then all was still and silent.

"Are you there, Mr. Calvert?" cried Milly, at last, as she moved out into the dark night air. "She is better now—much better. She seems inclined to sleep, and we have left her."

"You know how it came on?" asked he, in a whisper. "You know what brought it about?"

"No; nothing of it."

"It was a letter that I showed her—a letter of Loyd's to myself—conceived in such terms as no man of, I will not say of spirit, but a common pretension to the sense of gentleman, could write. Wait a moment; don't be angry with me till you hear me out. We had quarrelled in the morning. It was a serious quarrel, on a very serious question. I thought, of course, that all young men, at least, regard these things in the same way. Well, he did not. I have no need to say more, *he* did not, and consequently nothing could come of it. At all events, I deemed that the man who could not face an adversary had no right to brave a rival, and so I intimated to him. For the second time he differed with me, and dared in my own presence to prosecute attentions which I had ordered him to abandon. This was bad enough, but there was worse to come, for, on my return home from this, I found a letter from him in the most abject terms; asking my pardon—for what?—for my having insulted him, and begging me, in words of shameful humility, to let him follow up his courtship, and, if he could, secure the hand of your sister. Now she might, or might not, accept my offer. I am not coxcomb enough to suppose I must succeed simply because I wish success; but, putting myself completely out of the question, could I suffer a girl I deemed worthy of my love, and whom I desired to make my wife, to fall to the lot of one so base as this? I ask you, was there any other course open to me than to show her the letter? Perhaps it was rash; perhaps I ought to have shown it first of all to Miss Grainger. I can't decide this point. It is too subtle for me. I only know that what I did I should do again, no matter what the consequences might be."

"And this letter, has she got it still?" asked Milly.

"No, neither she nor any other will ever read it now. I have torn it to atoms. The wind has carried the last fragments this moment over the lake."

"Oh dear! what misery all this is," cried the girl, in an accent of deep affliction. "If you knew how she is attached——" Then suddenly checking the harsh indiscretion of her words, she added, "I am sure you did all for the best, Mr. Calvert. I must go back now. You'll come and see us, or perhaps you'll let me write to you, to-morrow."

"I have to say good-by, now," said he, sadly. "I may see you all again within a week. It may be this is a good-by for ever."

He kissed her hand as he spoke, and turned to the lake, where his boat was lying.

"How amazed she'll be to hear that she saw a letter—read it—held it in her hands," muttered he, "but I'll stake my life she'll never doubt the fact when it is told to her by those who believe it."

"You seem to be in rare spirits," said Barnard, when Calvert returned to the inn. "Have you proposed and been accepted?"

"Not exactly," said the other, smiling, "but I have had a charming evening; one of those fleeting moments of that 'vie de famille' Balzac tells us are worth all our wild and youthful excesses."

"Yes!" replied Barnard, scoffingly; "domesticity would seem to be your forte. Heaven help your wife, say I, if you ever have one."

"You don't seem to be aware how you disparage conjugal life, my good friend, when you speak of it as a thing in which men of *your* stamp are the ornaments. It would be a sorry institution if its best requirements were a dreary temperament and a disposition that mistakes moodiness for morality."

"Good night; I have had enough," said the other, and left the room.

"What a pity to leave such a glorious spot on such a morning," said Calvert, as he stood waiting while the post-horses were being harnessed. "If we had but been good boys, as we might have been—that is, if *you* had not fallen into matrimony, and *I* into a quarrel—we should have such a day's fishing here! Yonder, where you see the lemon-trees hanging over the rock, in the pool underneath there are some twelve and fourteen 'pounders,' as strong as a good-sized pike; and then we'd have grilled them under the chesnut-trees, and talked away, as we've done scores of times, of the great figure we were to make—I don't know when or how, but some time and in some wise—in the world; astonishing all our relations, and putting to utter shame and confusion that private tutor at Dorking, who *would* persist in auguring the very worst of us."

"Is that the bill that you are tearing up? Let me see it. What does he charge for that Grignolino wine and those bad cigars?" broke in Barnard.

"What do I know or care?" said Calvert, with a saucy laugh. "If you possessed a schoolboy's money-box with a slit in it to hold your savings, there would be some sense in looking after the five-franc pieces you could rescue from a cheating landlord, and add to your store; but when you know in your heart that you are never the richer nor the better of the small economies that are only realised at the risk of an apoplexy and some very profane expressions, my notion is, never mind them—never fret about them."

"You talk like a millionnaire," said the other, contemptuously.

"It is all the resemblance that exists between us, Bob; not, however, that I believe Baron Rothschild himself could moralise over the insufficiency of wealth to happiness as I could. Here comes our team, and I must say a sorrier set of screws never tugged in a rope harness. Get in first. I like to show all respect to the man who pays. I say, my good fellow," cried he to the postilion, "drive your very best, for mi Lordo here is immensely rich, and would just as soon give you five gold Marengos as five francs."

"What was it you said to him?" asked Barnard, as they started at a gallop.

"I said he must not spare his cattle, for we were running away from our creditors."

"How could you——"

"How could I? What nonsense, man! besides, I wanted the fellow to take an interest in us, and, you see, so he has. Old Johnson was right; there are few pleasures more exhilarating than being whirled along a good road at the top speed of post-horses."

"I suppose you saw that girl you are in love with?" said Barnard, after a pause.

"Yes; two of them. Each of the syrens has got a lien upon my heart, and I really can't say which of them holds 'the preference shares.'"

"Is there money?"

"Not what a great Crœsus like yourself would call money, but still enough for a grand 'operation' at Homburg, or a sheep-farming exploit in Queensland."

"You're more 'up' to the first than the last."

"All wrong! Games of chance are for fellows like you, who must accept Fortune as they find her. Men of *my* stamp mould destiny."

"Well, I don't know. So long as I have known you, you've never been out of one scrape without being half way into another."

"And yet there are fellows who pay dearer for their successes than ever I have done for my failures."

"How so? What do they do?"

"They marry! Ay, Bob, they marry rich wives, but without any power to touch the money, just as a child gets a sovereign at Christmas under the condition he is never to change it."

"I must say you are a pleasant fellow to travel with."

"So I am generally reputed, and you're a lucky dog to catch me 'in the vein,' for I don't know when I was in better spirits than this morning."

CHAPTER X. A DAYBREAK BESIDE THE RHINE.

THE day was just breaking over that wide flat beside the Rhine at Basle, as two men, descending from a carriage on the high road, took one of the narrow paths which lead through the fields, walking slowly, and talking to each other in the careless tone of easy converse.

"We are early, Barnard, I should say; fully half an hour before our time," said Calvert, as he walked on first, for the path did not admit of two abreast. "What grand things these great plains are, traversed by a fine river, and spreading away to a far distant horizon. What a sense of freedom they inspire; how suggestive they are of liberty; don't you feel that?"

"I think I see them coming," said the other. "I saw a carriage descend the hill yonder. Is there nothing else you have to say—nothing that you think of, Harry?"

"Nothing. If it should be a question of a funeral, Bob, my funds will show how economically it must be done; but even if I had been richer, it is not an occasion I should like to make costly."

"It was not of that I was thinking. It was of friends or relations."

"My dear fellow, I have few relatives and no friends. No man's executorship will ever entail less trouble than mine. I have nothing to leave, nor any to leave it to."

"But these letters—the cause of the present meeting—don't you intend that in case of—in the event of——"

"My being killed. Go on."

"That they should be given up to your cousin?"

"Nothing of the kind ever occurred to me. In the first place, I don't mean to be shot; and in the second, I have not the very remotest intention of releasing the dear Sophy from those regrets and sorrows which she ought to feel for my death. Nay, I mean her to mourn me with a degree of affliction to which anxiety will add the poignancy."

"This is not generous, Calvert."

"I'm sure it's not. Why, my dear friend, were I to detect any such weakness in my character, I'd begin to fancy I might end by becoming a poltroon."

"Is that your man—he in the cloak—or the tall one behind him?" said Barnard, as he pointed to a group who came slowly along through a vineyard.

"I cannot say; I never saw Mr. Graham to my knowledge. Don't let them be long about the preliminaries, Bob; the morning is fresh, and the ground here somewhat damp. Agree to all they ask, distance, and everything, only secure that the word be given by you. Remember that, and in the way I've told you."

As Calvert strolled listlessly along towards the river, Barnard advanced to meet the others, who, to the number of five, came now forward. Colonel Rochefort, Mr. Graham's friend, and Barnard were slightly acquainted, and turned aside to talk to each other in confidence.

"It is scarcely the moment to hope for it, Mr. Barnard," said the other, "but I cannot go on without asking, at least, if there is any peaceful settlement possible?"

"I fear not. You told me last night that all retraction by your friend of his offensive letter was impossible."

"Utterly so."

"What, then, would you suggest?"

"Could not Mr. Calvert be brought to see that it was he who gave the first offence. That, in writing, as he did, to a man in my friend's position——"

"Mere waste of time, colonel, to discuss this; besides, I think we have each of us already said all that we could on this question, and Calvert is very far from being satisfied with me for having allowed myself to entertain it. There is really nothing for it but a shot."

"Yes, sir; but you seem to forget, if we proceed to this arbitrament, it is not a mere exchange of fire will satisfy my friend."

"We are, as regards that, completely at his service; and if your supply of ammunition be only in proportion to the number of your followers, you can scarcely be disappointed."

The colonel reddened deeply, and, in a certain irritation, replied: "One of these gentlemen is a travelling companion of my friend, whose health is too delicate to permit him to act for him; the other is a French officer of rank, who dined with us yesterday; the third is a surgeon."

"To us it is a matter of perfect indifference if you come accompanied by fifty, or five hundred; but let us lose no more time. I see how I am trying my friend's patience already. Ten paces, short paces, too," began Barnard, as he took his friend's arm.

"And the word?"

"I am to give it."

"All right; and you remember how?"

"Yes; the word is, One—two; at the second you are to fire."

"Let me hear you say them."

"One—two."

"No, no; that's not it. One-two—sharp; don't dwell on the interval; make them like syllables of one word."

"One-two."

"Yes, that's it; and remember that you cough once before you begin. There, don't let them see us talking together. Give me a shake hands, and leave me."

"That man is nervous, or I am much mistaken," said Graham's invalid friend to the colonel; and they both looked towards Calvert, who, with his hat drawn down over his brows, walked lazily to his ground.

"It's not the reputation he has," whispered the colonel. "Be calm, Graham; be as cool as the other fellow."

The principals were now placed, and the others fell back on either side, and, almost instantaneously, so instantaneously, indeed, that Colonel Rochefort had not yet ceased to walk, two shots rung out, one distinctly before the other, and Graham fell.

All ran towards him but Calvert, who, throwing his pistol at his feet, stood calm and erect. For a few seconds they bent down over the wounded man, and then Barnard, hastening back to his friend, whispered, "Through the chest; it is all over."

"Dead?" said the other.

He nodded, and taking his arm, said, "Don't lose a moment; the Frenchman says you have not an instant to spare."

For a moment Calvert moved as if going towards the others, then, as if with a changed purpose, he turned sharply round and walked towards the high road.

As Calvert was just about to gain the road, Barnard ran after him, and cried out, "Stop,

Calvert, hear what these men say; they are crying out unfair against us. They declare——"

"Are you an ass, Bob?" said the other, angrily. "Who minds the stupid speech of fellows whose friend is knocked over?"

"Yes, but I'll hear this out," cried Barnard.

"You'll do so without *me*, then, and a cursed fool you are for your pains. Drive across to the Bavarian frontier, my man," said he, giving the postilion a Napoleon, "and you shall have a couple more if you get there within two hours."

With all the speed that whip and spur could summon, the beasts sped along the level road, and Calvert, though occasionally looking through the small pane in the back of the carriage to assure himself he was not pursued, smoked on unceasingly. He might have been a shade graver than his wont, and preoccupied too, for he took no notice of the objects on the road, nor replied to the speeches of the postilion, who, in his self-praise, seemed to call for some expression of approval.

"You are a precious fool, Master Barnard, and you have paid for your folly, or you had been here before this."

Such were his uttered thoughts, but it cost him little regret as he spoke them.

The steam-boat that left Constance for Lindau was just getting under weigh as he reached the lake, and he immediately embarked in her, and, on the same evening, gained Austrian territory at Bregenz, to pass the night. For a day or two, the quietness of this lone and little-visited spot suited him, and it was near enough to the Swiss frontier, at the Rhine, to get news from Switzerland. On the third day, a paragraph in the Basle Zeitung told him everything. It was, as such things usually are, totally misrepresented, but there was enough revealed for him to guess what had occurred. It was headed "Terrible Event," and ran thus:

"At a meeting which took place with pistols, this morning, between two English lords, at the White Meadows, one fell, so fatally wounded that his death ensued in a few minutes. An instantaneous cry of foul play amongst his friends led to a fierce and angry altercation, which ended in a second encounter between the first principal and the second of the deceased. In this the former was shot through the throat, the bullet injuring several large vessels, and lodging, it is supposed, in the spine. He has been conveyed to the Hôtel Royal, but no hopes of his recovery are entertained."

"I suspected what would come of your discussion, Bob. Had you only been minded to slip away with me, you'd have been in the enjoyment of a whole skin by this time. I wonder which of them shot him. I'd take the odds it was the Frenchman; he handled the pistols like a fellow who envied us our pleasant chances. I suppose I ought to write to Barnard, or to his people; but it's not an agreeable task, and I'll think over it."

He thought over it, and wrote as follows:

"Dear Bob,—I suspect, from a very confused paragraph in a stupid newspaper, that you have fought somebody and got wounded. Write and say if this be so, what it was all about, who did it, and what more can be done for you,

"By yours truly,

"Address, Como." "H. C.

To this he received no answer when he called at the post-office, and turned his steps next to Orta. He did not really know why, but it was, perhaps, with some of that strange instinct that makes the criminal haunt the homes of those he has once injured, and means to injure more. There was, however, one motive which he recognised himself; he wished to know something of those at the villa; when they had heard from Loyd, and what? whether, too, they had heard of his own doings, and in what way? A fatal duel, followed by another that was like to prove fatal, was an event sure to provoke newspaper notice. The names could not escape publicity, and he was eager to see in what terms they mentioned his own. He trusted much to the difficulty of getting at any true version of the affair, and he doubted greatly if any one but Graham and himself could have told why they were to meet at all. Graham's second, Rochefort, evidently knew very little of the affair. At all events, Graham was no longer there to give his version, while, for the incidents of the duel, who was to speak? All, save Barnard, who was dying, if not dead, must have taken flight. The Swiss authorities would soon have arrested them if within reach. He might therefore reassure himself that no statement that he could not at least impugn could get currency just yet. "I will row over to the old Grainger"—so he called her—"and see what she has heard of it all."

It was nightfall as he reached the shore, and walked slowly and anxiously to the house. He had learned at Orta that they were to leave that part of the world in another fortnight, but whither for, none knew. As he drew nigh, he determined to have a peep at the interior before he presented himself. He accordingly opened the little wicket noiselessly, and passed round through the flower-garden till he reached the windows of the drawing-room.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXIII. LILY IS IN A STRANGE COUNTRY.

IT was three o'clock on the following morning before the steam-packet Harlequin entered the harbour of Boulogne. Lily had had a fearful time of it. She was very comfortable, and almost happy during the passage of the vessel down the river; for the weather was fine, the water was smooth, and her protectress, betaking herself to the perusal of sundry volumes bound in yellow paper, left her at peace. Then, a gentleman in a braided surtout, with very large whiskers and moustache, a cap with a gold band to it, and who continually smoked a pipe with a very richly-coloured brown bowl, a silver top, and a green tassel depending from it, and who wore, besides, a leathern bag slung by a strap over his shoulder, was very kind to her, and showed her a variety of interesting objects on both banks of the river. He was a most good-humoured gentleman, but his English was, to Lily, well-nigh incomprehensible.

"Did you ligue joggolate?" he asked, in a hoarse voice, and a grin that sent his black whiskers very far apart indeed. "Joggolate is good for de liddle kinder. Yez, it is moldo grazioso. Denez, ma bedide, here is some joggolate."

He produced from the leathern bag, as he spoke, a stick of chocolate wrapped in some neat tinfoil. This covering he partially stripped off, broke off a piece of the sweetmeat, and popped it, with a jovial grin, between Lily's lips. The child had never tasted chocolate before. Then he began to fill his pipe from a pouch likewise produced from the leathern bag, and as he shut the latter, Lily seemed to hear the chinking of money.

"Mein good little friend, ma bonne amie, gif me de bouch," he continued. "It is moldo grazioso. She gif thems to me, begause I lof her. I lof de bipes and de tobacko. De bipes is not good for de liddle kinder. He make romfozzle in der stomjacks zo."

Then, from a pocket in his braided surtout, he took a little case-bottle, unscrewed the top, and applied it to his lips.

"De brandies is goods," he remarked, throwing his head back. "De brandies is goods for de mal de mer. By-and-by your mamma, when de sea shall romfozzle your stomjacks, shall give you some brandies in your tea. A ver liddle, zo. Vill you ave some more joggolate?"

But here the lady looked up from the French novel she was reading, and angrily bade the child come and sit beside her. "You are not to associate with servants and low people. Que font ces gens-là dans cette partie du vaisseau?"

Lily thought that if the braided and whiskered gentleman was a servant, he was a very handsome and a very good-natured one. He walked away, grumbling.

"Diavolo!" he murmured. "Quelle mégère. She needn'ts be so tam proud for what I am a gourier. Franz Stimm il vaut bien cette sauteuse sour les zevaux."

It would be, perhaps, more correct, as the braided gentleman was talking to himself, to inscribe, in their native tongue, the thoughts to which he gave utterance, but the gentleman hadn't any native tongue or native country either, to speak of; Franz Stimm was a courier, and knew all tongues, and all countries—a little.

By degrees the lady became absorbed again in the study of her French novels, and Lily stole softly away from her side, and went and sat on the little raised part of the deck above the rudder chains, and studied the weather-beaten man in the pea-jacket who was at the helm. By-and-by, being totally ignorant of the printed injunction of prohibition, she had the audacity to speak to the man at the wheel; and the man himself—it being a quiet afternoon, and the captain being in his cabin refreshing himself with his after-dinner grog—spoke to her. No great harm resulted from this contravention of maritime discipline. He told her all about the Dreadnought, and the windmills on the Essex shore, and the great guns at Woolwich Arsenal; also, that a many had been hung at Execution Dock, and that when he was a lad in war-time, he had been pressed and kept four days and nights aboard the guardship at the Nore, notwithstanding his being a 'prentice, and having a 'stificate from Waterman's Hall in his pocket.

But this confiding mariner was in time removed, and the hairy man in the striped guernsey who succeeded him was not so communicative. He

was absorbed with his spokes, and, what little time he had to spare, was devoted to dexterously ejecting the juice from the quid he was chewing over the leeward bulwark. Now and then he missed his aim, and then he swore monosyllabically. Lily couldn't make friends with him, and presently stole away.

In those days rich people were not quite so proud as they are now. At least, they did not appear quite so genteel, quite so exclusive, quite so shut up, as I learn they are at present. In these days a member of the "superior orders" would faint at the bare idea of travelling to Boulogne by the common packet from London Bridge; but, when Lily was young, a great many wealthy and high-born people were content to take that route as the pleasantest though not the shortest. And more than that, they took their servants and their carriages with them.

There was a handsome private carriage—a berline painted green, with a rumble, heavy wheels, and a big imperial on the roof—aboard the Harlequin, nearly amidships but slightly forward. Lily was wandering about the deck, and occasionally tripping herself up over the stiff protrusions of tarpaulin when she came to this carriage. She was admiring the pretty manner in which the wheels were lashed to bolts in the deck, when she heard a voice she recognised, and looking up saw that the carriage door was open. Standing thereat was the bearded gentleman with the braided surtout who spoke such very funny English.

"Acht Himmel!" he cried, pleased to see her. "Here is de liddle cal vat eat de joggolate. Mein Signor Generale, she is ver preddy. She is the dordor of de handsome dame dat loog lige de diger."

There was a gentleman in the carriage, reclining at full length on a mattress. He was covered to the chin with rugs, and cloaks, and furs, and had a yellow face, and looked very ill. He shrugged his shoulders peevishly at the courier's remark, and a thin voice, which seemed very tired of itself and all the world, bade Stimm not bother him, but bring him some orange-flower water.

"Bedder 'ave som brandies, my lord generale," observed Mr. Stimm, in respectful expostulation. "Ve gom ver soon do de Nore, and de eau de fleur d'oranger, he play de teufels vid your stomjacks. Bedder drinks de brandy."

"Hang your brandy," cried the yellow-faced invalid, peevishly. "One would think I was a private still. My stomach's my own—at least what I've got left of it. Get me the orange-flower water, do you hear me, hey?"

The courier turned to do his behest, and Lily, frightened, was moving out of his way, when her eyes met those of the sallow gentleman. His eyes were very languid and jaundiced, but they were very black.

He started up eagerly on his invalid couch. "Merciful Heavens!" he cried, "where have I seen that face before? Stimm, bring that child here."

But before Mr. Stimm could approach Lily, a harsh hand was laid on the child's shoulder. It was the handsome lady.

"You little plague! you little demon!" she cried furiously. "Here have I been à la chasse for you this half-hour. What am I to do with you? Shall I throw you into the water to be eaten by the black man—by the whales and sharks, I mean? Come away this moment;" and she dragged Lily aft.

The sallow gentleman was not quite so great an invalid as he seemed to be. He descended, grumbling and moaning, however, from his carriage, and followed the lady and child to the quarter-deck; but they hastily descended the companion-ladder, and then the lady shut herself with the child in the ladies' cabin.

Lily underwent many hours of the direst agony. It grew dark, and the stewardess brought her some tea and bread-and-butter, but she could scarcely swallow a mouthful. The tea-things clattered on the table horribly. A lamp was kindled, and it swung to and fro. They put Lily to bed on a shelf in a cupboard, and the shelf began to pitch forward, and dart backward, and then it seemed to be sliding away from Lily, and then she herself was dashed against the cupboard wall. She looked out, terrified, into the cabin, and lo! the ceiling was where the floor should have been. And all this while there was a dreadful creaking noise, as though a giant were being stretched on the rack, and a dreadful throbbing sensation, which shook the very pillow beneath her head, as though the giant's heart was bursting under the torture.

She was very sick. There were eleven ladies in the cabin, and they were all sick. There was a little girl of timid aspect, a year or so older than Lily, who appeared to look upon sea-sickness as a kind of penal chastisement ordained for her sins, and who, in the intervals of nausea, screamed, "Oh, don't! oh, please don't! oh, I will be good!" and the like deprecatory ejaculations. There was one lady, tall and thin, with sad-coloured ringlets, who perpetually reiterated a request to be thrown overboard; there was another, stout, of a rubicund countenance, who had been exceedingly jolly all the afternoon, and who now, with a ghastly visage, and rolled up into a ball in a corner, repeated at short intervals, "It's coming, it's coming! I hear it, I hear it! I hear it. Lawks ha' mercy upon us!" probably anticipating the immediate scuttling of the ship, or the end of the world. And there was a poor little baby, who, in the course of seven hours, assumed many cadaverous hues, from Indian yellow to bistre, and from neutral tint to pea-green, and was given up for dead many times. It was an awful night. The stewardess bore it unmoved. She was a hardy young woman, paid not to be sea-sick, but to keep a sharp look-out after her dues; and although on shore I dare say she was as truthful a young woman as ever wore the brown merino of ordinary life, she was, on board the Harlequin, a prodigy of cool mendacity,

declaring when the Harlequin was off Ramsgate that they were "nearly in," and when tossing about Deal, that her good man—meaning the steward—had just seen "Bolong light."

There was somebody else who was not sick; the handsome proud lady, Lily's protectress. She lay down on a sofa, covered herself with a great shawl, and went resolutely to sleep. Once or twice in the course of the night, waking up, she apostrophised the Harlequin, the company that owned it, and the captain and crew who navigated it, in bitterly sarcastic terms. The stewardess also she was mercilessly hard upon, for the offence of wearing thick shoes; and more than once she chid Lily for making a noise. She tended the suffering child, however, with a kind of stern tenderness, and then went to sleep again.

At last this night of torment came to a close. The Harlequin escaped at break of day from the buffeting boiling waters of the Channel, into the smooth waters of the port, and Lily was carried in the arms of a seaman, who, in his outward guise, looked very like a grisly bear, but in his manners was as gentle as a lamb, up a ladder to a quay. There the seaman set her down, on the shore of France.

A little man, not so very much taller than Lily, but with a big moustache, and a huge cutlass, and a broad sword-belt, and a very tall glazed shako, immediately seized on the Noah's ark which the seaman had deposited by Lily's side. The lady was close by her, but she forbore to seize the little man by the throat, or to cast him over the quay into the water. She spoke him very fair, and called him "Monsieur." Lily noticed that on this new ground her protectress was quite polite. The little soldier, however (he had red legs and bunches of red worsted on his shoulders), was as fierce as she was mild, and called out in a formidable voice, "A droite, à la Douane. Marchez donc!" Those were the days when Waterloo was still remembered, when international alliances and treaties of commerce were not thought of, and when the little soldiers of King Louis Philippe the First were very apt to be rude to those over whom they had authority.

Half stupified, trembling and dizzy with the soonest acquired, worst borne, and easiest cured of human ailments—dazed with the novelty of the scene, the glimmering lanterns contending with the grey dawn, the clash of arms, the hoarse voices of seamen and porters vociferating to each other in a strange language—the child followed her conductors to the custom-house. But, arrived there, the little inquisitive could not refrain from asking her companion why all the soldiers had red legs, and why they seemed so very angry with everybody?

Soon a stranger sight absorbed her attention. Along a low wooden bar, or counter, twenty trunks were arranged wide open, and as many men all with moustaches, or looking like soldiers, and all in a great passion, were apparently making beds. At least they tossed and tumbled the contents of all the trunks about, as though they were shaking up feather-beds: an operation which Lily had often watched with intense interest in Mrs. Bunnycastle's sleeping apartment at Rhododendron House. The bearded gentleman who had given her the chocolate was in the very thickest of the confusion, and had at least half a dozen trunks to be tossed and tumbled over. He brandished a huge bunch of keys, and seemed quite as angry as the men who looked like soldiers.

At length it came to the turn of Lily and her protectress. One of the soldiers asked the lady if she had anything to "declare;" whereupon she looked as though she would have very much liked to declare war upon *him*; but she was on her behaviour now, and observed that she had nothing liable to duty. Lily's little outfit was rummaged with a recklessness that would have driven to fury even the placable Mr. Ranns at Cutwig and Co.'s; and the lady's store of purple and fine linen was recklessly rumpled, and then crammed back again into her portmanteau, as though it were so many old rags.

Even when the trunks were re-locked, and their lids inscribed with cabalistic flourishes in chalk, their troubles were not at an end; for they were conducted into a naked, whitewashed apartment, over the door of which the word "Sûreté" was written, and there were subjected, at the hands of perhaps the ugliest and snuffiest old woman who ever wore gold rings in her ears and a mob-cap on her head, to the indignity of a personal search. It is scarcely needful to say that there were no smuggled commodities about Lily. There was very little outside her, and nothing at all inside her but nausea. The lady, also, passed scathless through an abominable ordeal which has happily become a thing of the past; but she contrived to lose her temper, and gave the old woman a piece of her mind—the which assumed such formidable dimensions, that the female searcher began to yell for "la garde," and the lady had to quiet her with a five-franc piece. There were some other ladies, however, who gave even more trouble. One went into hysterics, another vowed she would write to the Times, and a third made reiterated and passionate appeals to her "Henry" (meaning her absent husband), who was himself being searched in an adjoining apartment, strewing flowers of eloquence of the strongest Britannic odour on two maglignant douaniers. I think all the ladies who screamed contrived to smuggle something; and, as Lily passed out, she saw one—the lady who had been so very anxious to be thrown overboard—being unwound of innumerable strips of contraband textile fabrics as though she had been a bad leg.

Outside the custom-house there was much crowding and shouting; and a mob of shabby men, whose hair looked dreadfully in want of cutting, encircled the travellers, thrusting cards into their hands, and bawling out the names of different hotels. And, staggering before her, Lily saw an old woman—the twin

sister, seemingly, of the one who had half dragged her clothes off her back in the custom-house—with short petticoats of linsey-woolsey, and very stout legs, and very thick shoes, and a very round back, on which were poised the lady's large portmanteau, and Cutwig and Co.'s outfit. The old lady wore a mob-cap too, but she wore a man's hat over that, and a pea-jacket over her gown body, and presented a hybrid maritime appearance.

They found at last a carriage, and were taken to an hotel. And there Lily was put to bed. Quite exhausted and tired, she fell into a blessed balmy sleep, and did not wake up till late in the afternoon, when she found herself ravenously hungry, and as well as a little girl of eight years of age, with whom there had been nothing the matter but a bad fit of sea-sickness on the previous day, could be.

The lady was writing letters at a little table by the bedside.

"You lazy little thing," she said, but not very harshly. "We should have been on our road to Paris, hours ago. You have made me miss the diligence, and now we shall have to wait until to-morrow morning."

Some dinner was ordered, and it was brought by a waiter who looked quite like a gentleman, and had beautiful whiskers—but not so beautiful as those of the gentleman with the chocolate—and a clean white apron that reached down to his slippered feet. They had only a bedroom; "and," thought Lily to herself, "whatever would Mrs. Bunnycastle think if a man with whiskers were to come into her bedroom!"

Lily had a little cutlet for dinner, and some potatoes fried a delicate brown. The thin wine they gave her, though it tasted sour, was of a beautiful crimson colour, and Lily thought she would very much like to have a dress for a doll of that hue.

"I like dining here better than at the large house that smelt of fish so," she said, emboldened by the not unfavourable glance the lady had cast upon her while she was eating. "It is almost as good as dinner at school."

The lady frowned. "Petite bavarde," she returned. "One wants to hear no comparisons. You are to forget Greenwich, you are to forget the school where you were spoilt and petted by those foolish old women. You are going to a school where you will be treated properly, and have very different dinners."

Lily sighed, and relapsed into silence.

Towards sunset the lady took her for a walk about the streets, which seemed very strange to Lily, but pleased her infinitely. The houses were very white, and most of the windows had bright green blinds. The shops were full of the most delightful toys that Lily had ever seen, and among them she recognised with delight numerous little dolls the exact effigy of the old woman in the pea-jacket and the short petticoat, who had carried the lady's portmanteau and Cutwig and Co.'s trunk, from the custom-house to the carriage. Only these dolls hadn't any short pipes in their mouths, as the real woman had.

If Lily had been with Miss Barbara Bunnycastle, she would have dragged her to the window, and kept her there for ten minutes discussing the merits of these dolls. If she had been with the tall gentleman who kissed her at Greenwich—she seemed to feel the impress of his lips on her forehead now—she would have asked him boldly to buy her one of the dolls, and would have told him that she would pay for it when she grew up. But she was afraid to say such things to the lady, and could only sate herself with the fascinating images by casting furtive glances over her shoulder. She could not help, however—as they passed another shop whose window was positively bursting with dolls—asking the lady who the old women at the custom-house were, and why some of them wore red petticoats and some blue? They had met more ancient dames of the same stamp in the street that afternoon; but they were barefoot, and wore yellow kirtles, and carried great nets slung on sticks over their shoulders.

The lady told her, tartly, that the old women were sailors' widows. "It is good to be a widow," she continued, "when your husband is a robber, and a villain, and a lâche. Now ask me no more questions. Tu m'agaces."

They went for a walk on the pier, where it blew very hard, and a brave colour came into Lily's cheeks, which the agony of the Harlequin had rendered wan. They met a good many gentlemen who seemed on speaking terms with the lady. Some of them patted Lily on the head, but she did not like them. They seemed coarse and rude to her.

"They are not so nice as the gentlemen at Greenwich," she remarked, timidly. "Ah! what a nice gentleman that was who said he was wicked! But I don't believe he was wicked. He had such beautiful eyes, and he was so kind to me. I don't like these gentlemen."

Her companion angrily bade her, for a little fool, hold her tongue, and they resumed their promenade. They passed a great many ladies who were *not* on speaking terms with the countess, but were on staring terms with, or rather at, her. They looked at her very hard, and then averted their heads.

At first the lady was scornful, and muttered that there was no need for them to turn up their noses, nature having turned them up quite sufficiently as it was. But anon she grew fierce; and, as they turned back from the pier-head, cried, loud enough for Lily to hear her:

"Malediction! Am I the cholera? Am I the plague? I buy my bonnets where those English misses buy theirs. I use the same whalebone and buckram. I paint myself with the same paint. Why do they stare at me as though I were a beast in the Jardin des Plantes?"

Why indeed? Lily could not tell. She had seen some ladies as handsome as the

countess pass by, and yet there was not one of them who looked so peculiar. It is certain that she had an odd appearance. What was there in her? She was dressed in exquisite taste. She had no gaudy hues in her garments. It was very strange, but so it was. Perhaps her temper had something to do with it.

So, Lily pondering and the lady fuming, they returned to the hotel, where Lily was glad to be put to bed early, and the lady sat up till late reading her novels. They were both up by seven in the morning. There was a disturbance about the bill, and the countess told the landlord he was a robber. But that was usual; and all things considered, the lady might for once have hit the right nail on the head. I have stopped at the same hotel myself (I won't mention it by name, for fear of being libellous), and I can't help thinking, under correction, that the landlord *was* a robber.

MORE TRIFLES FROM CEYLON.

Of all animals the elephant is the most restless. He is never quiescent for an instant. While standing in his stable, he is either flapping his ears, or moving his trunk, or rubbing one leg against the other. At Kandy, the elephants belonging to the temple are drawn up on the esplanade at sunset every evening, where they may be seen going through their grotesque and ceaseless movements. They are used for purposes of pageantry by the Buddhist priests, and great as their terror is of fire while in a savage state, will walk with the greatest unconcern, when tamed, through the streets of Kandy during the festival of the Perahera, surrounded by torch-bearers and thousands of spectators. A few of the Kandian chiefs own an elephant or two; but their possession by private individuals is by no means common. I was travelling on official business one day in the central province, when my progress on horseback was arrested by a river, swollen by heavy rains. I found that a Kandian headman had sent his elephant to carry me over; but it was necessary for me to straddle across his back, as if on horseback: the luxury of a howdah being one that the Kandian chiefs do not indulge in. I mounted the elephant, having first taken the precaution to remove my spurs. I was agreeably surprised to find how easy the motion was, and was also interested by the caution and intelligence the creature displayed in avoiding the rocks concealed beneath the turbid waters. On arriving at the opposite bank, his mahout directed him to kneel, which order he obeyed; but, as I was about to dismount, the elephant, either alarmed by my European dress, or by some other unexplained cause, suddenly sprang up and ran off. The mahout called out to me not to be afraid, but to hold on to his (the mahout's) waist: a proposal which, considering the difference in our weights, was rather amusing, as I must inevitably have pulled him off had I lost my own balance. I preferred gripping my steed with the knee, and passing my arms round my human friend's waist; and I held on to the chain which was round the elephant's neck until he saw fit to stay his career. When I had dismounted in safety, a little whipper-snapper boy, of about twelve years old, sprang on the elephant's neck and rode off at a smart round walk, looking as if he meant to say to me, "*I'll* teach you how to do it," which he probably did.

It is extraordinary with what rapidity a stream in this country, which a few hours ago was scarcely above your horse's fetlocks, will become a foaming torrent. I remember coming one afternoon, during a heavy shower, to a stream which I had the previous day passed with ease. As I approached, I saw a mass of water pouring in a foaming cataract over the cliffs above; I at once crossed, and the water was not above my horse's girths. My horsekeeper, who had lingered a few hundred yards behind, found the stream up to his shoulders. My Coolies and servants, who were still further in the rear, were unable to cross at all for some hours, and there was nothing for them to do but to wait, like Horace's rustic, while I lay shivering in a temporary bungalow. Fortunately the waters subside in these mountain streams as rapidly as they rise. With the rivers, the process is slower.

I was one afternoon walking along a bridle-path, my horsekeeper leading my horse, when we reached a shelving mass of rock, over which a stream flowed, which it was necessary to cross. As I approached it, I removed from my shoulders a plaid I had thrown over them, for it occurred to me that my feet might slip in the stream, which, after winding among some masses of rock, fell into a whirlpool at the head of a waterfall. It was well that I took the precaution, for no sooner had I stepped into the stream, than I felt that I could not retain my footing—the surface of the inclining rock, over which the water ran, gave no hold to my feet—I could neither advance nor recede, and felt myself carried off my legs. I at once threw myself down under the water, that I might be carried off feet-foremost. It is well I did so, for had I gone head-foremost I should have been stunned before arriving at the pool at the head of the waterfall. As it happened, I dropped unhurt into the pool, and at once struck out for the bank, which I reached in safety; but my plaid and umbrella went over the waterfall, and I felt too thankful that I had not followed them, to regret their loss.

When I was, say a dozen years younger than I am now, I took it into my head to make a tour through part of the hill country without any horsekeeper or other servants. I started from Newera Ellia, the mountain sanatarium, and travelled through the lovely district of Ambegamoa to Colombo. In the course of my journey I had occasion to cross the Kalany-ganga, at that time swollen by rains. I was mounted on a little pony, a blanket was fastened behind my saddle, and my clothes were strapped in front. On reaching the bank of the river,

I asked a man who was standing there, if I could ride across, on which he answered that I could. I accordingly rode in, but soon found that the pony was out of his depth. When a horse is swimming, it is best to leave his head quite free, lest the rider pull him over. I adopted this precaution; but, before we had reached the middle of the stream, the poor pony — he had come a long stage already, the blanket had filled with water, and was bearing him down—had turned his head down the stream. The position was becoming critical. I slipped my feet out of the stirrups preparatory to striking out for a boat which was crossing, should the worst come to the worst; for, though a bad swimmer, I could have managed that short distance. But before abandoning my pony, I resolved to try what could still be done, so I took up the reins, turned his head as gently to the opposite shore as I could, and encouraged him to proceed; the gallant little creature carried me over safely; and as we scrambled dripping up the bank, the ferryman emerged from his hut, where he had been comfortably sitting, and demanded sixpence for the boat I had *not* employed! On reaching the residence of the magistrate, who lived near by, he told me that had I been carried past the ferry, I must have been lost.

A Singhalese outrigger dhonie has just run in under the land, and now lies close to the shore. As she was standing in, one of the Peninsular and Oriental steamers from Calcutta, bound for Point de Galle, Aden, and Suez, passed her. What a contrast; the one a type of progress, the other of stagnation! Probably when King Wijeyottee first landed on the shores of Ceylon with his followers, five hundred and forty-three years before Christ, he came in a craft exactly like this dhonie that lies at anchor close by, on this the seventeenth day of February, A.D. 1864. There she is, with two crooked sticks which she calls masts. One great sail, which lies on her thatched deck, a large rudder worked by a tiller, and a *wooden* anchor, which is sunk by the help of stones. Her planks are sewn together with coir yarn, and she is prevented from capsizing by a great outrigger; were we to examine her register, we should find her described as "carvel built, stem and stern nearly alike." She has, it may be, come from Madras with a cargo of rice, or perhaps she is carrying sundries coastwise; her size may be eighty or a hundred tons. Her crew will consist of some thirteen men, besides the tindal or master. When they wish to ascend the rigging, if such a term can be used, they will climb up the ropes with the aid of their toes, which, very properly, they call their "foot fingers," and with which they can pick up a thing from the ground as readily as we can with our digits.

Although these dhonies are queer-looking craft, they are very safe and very dry boats, and before the wind they run very fast. I remember sailing along the Coromandel coast in one of the Jaffna dhonies, which, by the way, have no outrigger. A French vessel was running up the same coast all day, but she did not overtake us, though in full sail. We were about the same distance apart, when we reached the French port of Pondicherry.

But for speed, commend me to the outrigger canoe of the Singhalese. Take a long tree, hollow it out, sew on a kind of bulwark, attach an outrigger, hoist your sail, let down your lee-boards, steer with them, and run out to sea, hug the land when the breeze creeps off the shore in the early morning; and you will skim along the waves like a flying-fish. See yon square rig on the horizon, steering the same course as we are. In an hour we are abreast of her. Another hour, and she is on the horizon behind us. And now the sun is growing hot, and you creep into your palanquin, which is securely lashed to a small platform, and there you lie, reading or dozing, till the wind has veered round and is ahead of you. So you run in to shore, land near a tope of cocoa-nuts, and have your breakfast comfortably, bathe, and dress. In the afternoon you take your gun, stroll into the country, shoot a partridge or two, a hare, a deer, maybe a pea-fowl, and return to your boat and dine. At sunset the land breeze again springs up, and off you go and sail all night. You spend half your time on shore; and you reach your destination—say the extreme north of the island—very much sooner than you would have reached it in a nasty, cockroachy, dirty square rig, with sixty or seventy natives all sea-sick around you, and yourself not much better.

But there is another side to this pleasing picture. Public business has called you to the capital, and has detained you for several weeks, while some loved one has been pining, sick in mind and body, by the sad sea waves, at a distant out station. At last you are free, and the question is how to get home again.

The Pearl, H.M. colonial steamer, has gone to Calcutta to be cured of the barnacles. The strong north-east is still blowing dead in your teeth all day, and it would be a long business to beat up against it in a sailing ship. At last there is a lull, and you flatter yourself the force of the monsoon has abated, and that the wind has taken a slant from the west. The land breeze blows for a night or two, and your mind is made up; you will be off by an outrigger canoe from Negombo. Thither you proceed and engage a fine large canoe to take you to Jaffna, and the tindal declares you shall be there in four days if this wind lasts. The sly rogue! He has to sail whether you engage a passage or not, for is he not going to fish off the Mullativoe Bank during the season? You embark with your servants, your prog, and your palanquin. You glide slowly down the back water for half a mile and cross the bar, as day is breaking. Up runs the sail and away you go, the treacherous land breeze wooing you on to your fate. And now you glide through a whole fleet of fishing canoes standing out to sea, and now you lose sight of Negombo, and at about twelve or one you reach the hospitable home of the district judge of Chilaw, and all has gone

swimmingly, and you begin to think that your boatman's words were the words of truth. Thus was I, unhappily, deluded the last time I made the voyage.

At nine P.M. I re-embarked from Chilaw, but when I had, with much toil, reached the neighbourhood of Calpentyn, the wind blew dead in our teeth, and it was evident that it had made up its mind to blow for a week at least. I am devoutly thankful that I never was the magistrate of Calpentyn. That unfortunate individual lives all alone in a ruined fort, the walls of which look exactly as if they had the mange. The surrounding scenery is cocoa-nut and sand, ankle-deep. My host kept no horse, for he could get no grass for a horse to eat, and his visitors were principally dugongs (or mermaids) and sea turtle. After remaining for a day or two, I resolved to abandon my boat and take to land journeying. A tradition was current in Calpentyn that there was a man on the other side of the lake who had a pony. Could I but succeed in securing this animal how happy should I be. But, to say the truth, I felt almost as sceptical as if I were going in search of a unicorn. After dinner one evening, I started with two servants, some light baggage, and a gun, for the region to which story directed me, and we poled across the lake in a canoe. We arrived long before dawn at a river which seemed to have as many mouths as Cerberus, and as my boatmen were perfectly ignorant which mouth they ought to take, and as each mouth they attempted proved unnavigable after a short distance, my patience was somewhat tried. Fortunately, at daybreak, we saw and hailed a couple of men in a canoe who directed us how to go, and after rowing for a few miles we landed and proceeded on foot by a narrow path towards the pomparipo, or "rest-house."

Walking through forests with a gun is always interesting when you know that at any moment you may meet any animal from an elephant to a jungle-cock. The sun was well up when we emerged from the wood, and saw the dilapidated bungalow on the open plain. My first question was for the rest-house keeper. On him my hopes depended, for he was the reputed owner of *the* pony. Alas! he was away, and *the* pony? he had gone on its back—"whither?" Oh joy—to a place some sixteen miles off, but in the direction in which I was travelling. Should I wait for his return, or should I go on? I would go on foot; but we must sleep in the forest. No matter. On we went as soon as the sun would permit, with a few Coolies.

As darkness was closing in, we reached a tank in the heart of the forest. Here we encamped, lighted a fire to keep off the wild beasts, and slept till two in the morning, when I roused my people, and we continued on our weary way through heavy sand. An elephant had preceded us, but we did not come upon him. With the first streak of day we reached the village where the pony was to be found. With the greatest caution I proceeded to reconnoitre my ground, for my fear was that should the owner see me, he might mount his gallant steed and gallop off, thinking I was going to his rest-house, and not wishing it to be known that he had deserted his post. Such are Asiatics! Europeans (of course) never do such things. After prowling about I saw a sight which sent the blood rushing to my toes and back again to my heart. I saw——*The Pony;* he was tethered in a garden near a house; the inmates were buried in sleep; I cautiously advanced, silently grasped his rope, and he was mine!

Having secured my prize, I aroused the inmates of the hut. The door was opened by an old lady, who seemed much surprised at the unusual sight of a white man, for this line of road is seldom travelled, and the bungalows are falling into decay. Of course she pretended not to know where the owner of the pony was; but when I had satisfied her that I had no evil intentions, she called him, and I proceeded to present in due form the letter of introduction with which I had provided myself at Calpentyn, in testimony of my respectability and fitness to be trusted with *the* animal. To do the man justice he behaved very fairly, and the high contracting parties came to an agreement which left the pony with me, either permanently or temporarily, as I should decide at the end of the next day's journey. With a light heart I that afternoon careered out of the village on my gallant steed. What was distance to a man with a quad and a gun, a pillow, a rug, a suit of clothes, a cook and a butler!

We passed some elephants recently captured, and slept at Aripo, a place periodically teeming with life for a few weeks during the pearl fishery, but otherwise almost deserted. Next morning we reached Manaar, which is separated from the mainland by an arm of the sea. Through this, I rode for three weary miles, when I found myself among the shipping, and a ferry canoe took me across the channel, towing the pony after us. Here poor "Pomparipo" well-nigh met with a watery grave. Whether he was fatigued, or whether he suffered from some physical infirmity, or whether he lost his presence of mind, or whether he was tired of life, I cannot say; but no sooner did he find himself out of his depth than he gave a groan, turned up the whites of his eyes, went over on his side, and resigned himself to fate. I was obliged to hold up his head by main force, momentarily expecting that his rotten bridle would break; however, we managed to get him across; and I thought it best to restore him to his home and friends as soon as possible, and I believe he reached them in safety, as I did mine at last.

Waterspouts may frequently be seen off the coast of Ceylon. A very little time ago one of them was the cause of a most terrible catastrophe. The coffee districts of Ceylon are entirely dependent on India for their labour, and a certain number of vessels chartered by govern-

ment run to and fro between two parts, the one on the Indian, and the other on the Ceylon coast, freighted with Malabar Coolies, who either are coming in search of employment, or are returning with their little savings to their own country. As one of these vessels was crossing, a waterspout burst upon her, capsized her, and drowned one hundred and fourteen human beings, men, women, and children.

The most primitive of all sea-going craft, and, at the same time, the safest if not the driest and most comfortable, is the katemaraur. The word literally means "tied trees," and gives a very correct idea of the thing. It consists of four light logs of wood lashed to each other, and is about twenty feet long. It carries a small dusky-coloured leg of mutton sail, and is usually manned by two amphibious beings. Seen in the water when sailing, it looks like a brown butterfly with its wings folded. When the sea is lashed into foam and the breakers dash against the shore, and the scud flies through the air, and no other craft dare put to sea, then is the catamaran (I adopt the ordinary incorrect mode of spelling) seen in its glory. This is no time for hoisting the sail, nor are two men sufficient to work against the breakers; four or five launch it with a run; spring in as it clears the first wave, and pull for dear life; another comes —the steersman watches it as it rolls in—*through* it they go, the wave sweeping clean over them, and away they pull again; another and another, and they are clear of the ground swell, and well out towards that ship that now dips her bowsprit beneath the surge, and now raises it to the skies. Soon they are alongside, a rope is thrown to them which they carry to the shore, and when the vessel strikes a few minutes afterwards—for she has been dragging her anchor for the last hour—a line of communication has been formed between her and the land.

Between Point Calimere in the Madras Presidency and the northern coast of Ceylon, the mail-bags are daily carried to and fro in catamarans, and wild, indeed, must be the storm that detains them. Sometimes they capsize, but this is considered a slight event. The two men in charge are almost as much at home in the water as on the land. They untie the logs, readjust the waterproof bags, hoist their sail, and off they go again. It is a forty miles' run, and takes from six to ten hours.

There was a missionary in Jaffna who used to cross over to India in one of these things occasionally, and return with money for the people employed under him. On one occasion he was becalmed; the crew, exhausted by rowing, wished to anchor, and as they had nothing else to serve their purpose, they tied a rope to his money-box and let that down. I know of only one instance in which *two* gentlemen came over together on the same catamaran. I was one of the two, and am the survivor. It is a sad tale.

In the month of April, a dear friend and I crossed over to the Indian coast in a native vessel, and spent a few days at the pretty little French settlement of Pondicherry, with its flat-roofed houses, its boulevards, and its straight tidy streets; a place where I have been told "there are forty young ladies and only five young gentlemen in a position to marry!" To Pondicherry every one betakes himself who has got into a scrape in the adjoining British possessions: unless, therefore, you are furnished with letters of introduction, the residents are naturally reluctant to admit you into their society. However, as we were provided with these, we were invited to dine with a merchant. During dinner, some one asked me what had brought me to Pondicherry? To which rather suspicious question, I replied, that I was, in Ceylon, the possessor of a Pondicherry screen, on which was depicted a phaeton drawn by a wondrous white horse, one of whose legs was longer than the other three, and that I had been seized by a desire to see the original: a desire so strong, that I could not rest until I had satisfied my curiosity. A wondrous screen it was, in good sooth. It was difficult to know whether to admire more the boldness of its conception, or the brilliancy of its design. There, besides the carriage and horse aforesaid, were to be seen the government-house, and what is more, there was the governor himself, "a walking in the garding around," clad in flaming red unmentionables, a green coat, and a cocked-hat. The artist had seized the moment when he stood pointing authoritatively to a shrub, while a native servant held an umbrella over his head, and behind him a dog with a curly tail pawed the air with his fore legs. In the background the banner of France waved proudly in the breeze. After dinner it was proposed that the ladies should take a drive; their carriage was brought to the door; and I at once recognised it as being the identical carriage depicted on my screen. The limner himself was at work on the premises too: so I had a look at him also.

After a few days' stay, we procured some bullock carts, and travelled down the coast; for although the wind had been favourable for going, it was dead against our returning, and we wished to get so far south as to have a slanting breeze by which we might cross. We passed through Cuddalore; through Tranquebar, once the property of the Danes; through Negapatan, with its Jesuit College; and at length reached the salt plains of Calimere, where the antelopes graze in peace eight months in the year, and are coursed by the Anglo-Indian visitors during the remaining four; and where the little foxes dig holes, in which the aforesaid Anglo-Indians frequently come to grief. Calimere is visited for the sake of its sea breezes only; the Europeans, who make it the place of their temporary sojourn, occupy thatched bungalows, which they furnish in camp fashion during their stay. We found but one family there on our arrival; and although perfect strangers, were received with the frank hospitality peculiar to India.

I had limited leave of absence, and had already over-stayed it. The wind was blowing with

much force, and no boat would put to sea; and I resolved to cross on a tappul catamaran. On communicating my intention to my companion, he said he would accompany me. It has always been a comfort to me, that the resolution on his part was taken without any proposal from me that he should do so. At twelve in the day, we started; and in about two hours we could barely discern the tops of the trees on the Indian coast; we were already speculating how long it would be before we should reach Ceylon, when our boatmen informed us that we must put back, for the wind would not permit of our proceeding. It is my own belief that they knew this when we started. In Ceylon, our outspoken Tamulians would at once have said so; but the more subservient Madrasees did not venture to do it. The collector had ordered a boat, and they obeyed. They had relied upon our giving in of our own accord, under the discomforts of our cramped and wet situation; and finding we did *not* give in, they told us what they might have told us before we started. Hitherto, I had staved off sea-sickness by singing every song I could think of; but when our heads were turned away from the breeze, and our hopes were damped, that wretched feeling crept over me, and, as usual with me, induced a drowsiness so excessive, that, although to have relaxed my hold for a moment on the single rope that held the sail would have been to be washed overboard, I believe that I was several times asleep. At four o'clock we reached the spot where we had embarked. "And all this over again, to-morrow!" said my friend. Early next morning we again set sail. The wind had somewhat moderated, and was more in our favour; at about noon we discerned the low coast of Ceylon, far away in the distance. But now, the sun, which the sail had, to a great extent, defended us from, streamed down upon us with all its power, nor were its reflected rays from the water much less distressing than those which smote us direct. We had, however, contrived to keep some sandwiches dry; and although we did not dare to leave go the rope by which we held on—for every wave through which we ran struck us with much force—still we found our way to our mouths with the spare hand. At half-past three in the afternoon we touched the shores of Ceylon, after eight and a half hours' sailing, and staggered up the beach to the house of the customs officer, who kindly gave us some refreshment. We had brought over some spare clothing in a tin box; on opening it, I found that some silkworms' eggs, which I had secured in a bottle, had hatched during the voyage.

My friend and I parted that afternoon, on our arrival in Jaffna, as men do who expect to meet on the morrow. I never saw him again. The exposure he had undergone brought on one of those complaints which often prove rapidly fatal in the tropics, and a few days later I was summoned from my station to attend his remains to their last resting-place. The man who, humanly speaking, could least be spared, was taken; the man then without wife or child to mourn his loss, was left.

There is a bird in Ceylon, sometimes heard after nightfall, called by the natives the "Devil Bird," on account of its appalling shriek. So rarely is this bird seen, that naturalists are still uncertain whether it is an owl or a night hawk. All who have heard it, agree in saying that no sound can be more fearful than its scream. I am to this day uncertain whether I have heard it or not. I had occasion to pass a night in the "rest-house" at Caltura, a station between Colombo and Jalle. I had with me a large sum of government money, and as there were several travellers with Coolies and servants within the same building, I placed the box containing the money, beside me, in bed. In the dead of the night I was awoke by a fearful and prolonged shriek, which echoed through the whole building. I sprang out of bed, with the first idea that some one was being murdered, but next moment I remembered the money, and it occurred to me that this might be some device to draw me away from it. I therefore called to one of the "peons," who were with me, to come and guard the money, and then proceeded to try to discover the cause of the noise. The people who were sleeping about the verandahs had also been aroused by the sound, which appeared to have proceeded from within. A light was brought and search was made everywhere; two servants were asleep in one of the inner rooms and they had not been awakened; either one of these two men had had nightmare, and in his sleep uttered these unearthly yells; or, the noise was made by some one about the place expressly for the purpose of robbing me of the money should I leave it unguarded; or, a devil bird had his abode somewhere in the old roof and had uttered these shrieks just as he took flight in search of prey: which is the time at which this bird usually utters his appalling cry.

In Ceylon there is not usually anything like that organised system of gang robbery of which one hears in India. For this there may be various reasons; one by no means unimportant reason is, that the soil belongs in Ceylon to the people, not to the government, as in India; and that almost every man has a patch of land, to which he clings with such tenacity, that he will not part with it for any amount of money, and will spend any amount in defending his title to it; were he to take to robbing, he would have to evade justice, and some neighbour would possess himself of this land. There are those who consider the minute sub-division of lands among all the children of a deceased proprietor, a great evil, and no doubt it has its disadvantages; but, contrariwise, it should be remembered that the ownership is an inducement to respectability and responsibility. A great deal of the crime committed among us, with malice prepense, and for the sake of booty, is committed by vagabonds from the low country, who have no stake in the soil, and who go to the Kandian

country to live by their wits. Just at present we *have* a Ceylon Jack Sheppard, who is carrying things with a very high hand. Sardiel is his "honourable name," as the Chinese say. He is said to be armed with revolvers, and to swagger about in open day in the bazaar of a village on the high road to Kandy, through which a mail-coach runs. None of the villagers dare refuse him anything; he takes the bride from the bridegroom, the daughter from her parents. He simply says, "I am Sardiel," and the thing is done. He has collected around him a band of kindred spirits, and is the terror of the country.

As this kind of proceeding is novel, there is no organised force here, as in the Ghauts of the Bombay Presidency, expressly to put down such gangs; but government has offered a heavy reward for the apprehension of this robber chieftain, or any of his band; and the police have been set upon his track. A few days ago, they almost succeeded in surrounding a house in which Sardiel and some of his companions were; but unfortunately they managed to get out, and to cross a rice-field; the police pursued them, but the robbers outran them, whereupon the gallant defenders of our lives and liberties halted and placed their guns against a tree whilst they recovered their breath. Meanwhile, Mr. Sardiel also halted, doubled, crept quietly up to where the guns were resting, seized one of them, took aim at a policeman, fired, and ran off with the gun. The ball passed through part of the policeman's coat, but did him no further injury.

In the Bombay Ghauts the robbers often avenge themselves on their enemies by cutting off their noses. The putting on of new noses has consequently become a profession. I have, in the Bombay Presidency, seen a very fairly executed false nose made by a native artist by cutting part of the skin of the forehead in like manner as is done in England.

Although there is not at the present time any regular system of robbery prevalent, there are *occasionally* instances in the remotest parts of the island, of robbers entering a house at night and torturing the inmates to induce them to reveal where their treasures are hidden. Some of their modes of torture are distressingly ingenious. There was also at one time a crime very prevalent in the northern province called "ear-cutting." In later years it ceased almost wholly, and during a residence of about ten years in that province, I never had to take judicial cognisance of that crime. It consisted in cutting, or tearing from the ears of some wealthy passer-by, the massive gold ear-rings, sometimes ten in number, which he, according to Tamul custom, wore. Although this crime had almost died out, I see that at the last sessions five men were tried for its commission.

The robbers of India have carried their arts to perfection. In some places it is necessary to pay black mail to escape being victimised. In Bombay, during the hot months, the wealthier Europeans live on the esplanade near the sea-shore in tents or temporary bungalows, and every family hires a thief to act as a watchman. An officer on the march in the Madras Presidency halted at a certain place. The chief of the thieves waited on him, and told him it was a very bad place; there were a great many rogues in it; would the Sahib allow him to do watchman? (for a consideration, of course, understood). No, said the officer, he would post his sentries as usual, and if any thief approached the tents the thief would find himself the worse for it. The sentries were accordingly posted, and the rest of the detachment went to sleep. The next morning not a musket was to be found save those of the sentries. The sentries all declared that not one of them had slept, and that they had kept the strictest watch. In this unpleasant predicament, the officer sent for the "Watchman" who had tendered his services, having doubtlessly promised to do him no harm before the astute old villain presented himself.

On his arrival, the officer told him of the loss, and promised him a reward if the muskets were returned. "I told the Sahib there were bad men here; I will try what can be done; but mind, I know nothing of the affair myself." What could the unfortunate officer do, but wink at what he knew was a lie. In a few hours the old man returned, and said he had obtained information that the muskets would be found hidden in a certain nullah, or dry water-course. There they were, sure enough. The "Watchman" pocketed a heavier reward than he would have got if his services had been engaged before, and the officer proceeded on his way, a wiser man. The manner in which the thing was done, was this. As the sentry turned his back, a dusky form crept nearer and nearer to the tents, another and another following; so stealthy were the movements, so cunningly did the movers avail themselves of any bush or scrub, or inequality of the ground, that their presence was never suspected. At length, watching his opportunity, the foremost opened a corner of a tent on the side opposite to that where the sentry was patrolling, entered, and abstracted a musket; this he handed to the companion immediately behind him, who handed it to the next, and so on, until the last had been removed, when the party retreated as they had advanced.

In Ceylon, as in India, thieves are in the habit of greasing themselves all over, in order that, if seized, they may slip through the fingers like eels.

The most common kind of robbery here, and the one least easy of detection, is cattle-stealing. The cattle of the villagers graze about the neighbourhood, in places where bushes and trees afford concealment for one or two thieves, who are generally men of a certain amount of influence to boot. Watching their opportunity, they seize a bullock, hurry him away through by-paths all night to some distant place, where their confederates are waiting to receive them,

and before the owner discovers his loss, the animal is slaughtered and eaten, or sold to a butcher.

GUIDO'S MODEL.

Guido Reni in a Roman palace chamber
Sat one pleasant summer afternoon
('Twas the old Farnese's sumptuous palace).
The walls were blazoned with the gilded moon
In crescent, and sweet tangles of those flowers
That blossom into faces, while birds play,
Fluttering from twig to twig, and lizards run
Below, and jewelled beetles crawl from spray to spray.

The great hall window, reaching to the floor,
Stood open for the vine to ramble in;
The birds were in the garden down below;
The silver-column'd fountain, tall and thin
As a magician's wand, rose in the air;
Great yellow clouds, laden with sunshine, passed;
The sky, one flawless sapphire, floated there.

Guido was painting, half entranced in thought;
Guido was painting that pure, gentle face
You've seen in lonely chapels oft and oft;
Calm, sweet and radiant, with a saintly grace;
Chaste as a virgin martyr glorified;
Without one thought of earth, pure as the snow
Upon the Alp-peak, with no stain of sin
Sullying her form, save where one rapturous glow

Of coldest sunshine lit her marbly breast;
The dove-like eyes were all intent on heaven.
A Sabbath sanctity was in the air,
And not one glare of Passion's burning leven.
Where was the proud and dark-eyed beauty then,
The painter's model? Where the peasant-girl
All love and happiness? Where, then, was she
With throbbing bosom and with lavish curl?

Only a blear-eyed crone in a low chair,
Facing the central window, dozed or prayed.
Her cheeks were wrinkled leather, and her hair,
In one grey, half-starved knot of grizzled braid,
Crowned her old nodding, semi-palsied head.
Her breviary was resting on her knees,
Nor recked she what the chiding painter said.

In came the cardinal, grave, and coldly wise.
His scarlet gown and robes of cobweb lace
Trailed on the marble floor; with convex-glass
He bent o'er Guido's shoulder; soon his face
Grew wistful, and then curdled to a smile,
As he beheld the crone, and looked again.
"Where is thy model, Guido?" Guido said,
"I keep her, cardinal, locked up in my brain."

ALL MOONSHINE.

There is a belief general in this kingdom, in all European countries, and probably in countries not European, that the moon exercises a direct influence on the weather. It is not confined to one class, nor to the uneducated. The peer, who is anxious with respect to the effect of the weather on the hatching and growth of his pheasants and partridges, is just as likely to look at the almanack for the time of the moon's changes during the critical period, as the farmer who is thinking only of the weather in connexion with the harvest. Nearly everybody appears to take a lively interest in knowing what the weather will be a day, three days, or a week hence. It is, moreover, a weakness with almost every man to consider himself a judge of the weather.

With the majority of people, the influence of the moon on the weather is accepted as a fact, without their being able to give any reason for their faith. But there are those who argue that if the moon, with the aid of the sun, causes the ocean tides, it is far more easy for the moon to exercise a powerful influence on a fluid so mobile as the atmosphere. The sun, they say, raises vapours from the sea, lakes, rivers, and swamps, into the atmosphere; clouds being thus formed, the influence of the moon intervenes and acts upon those clouds and upon the atmosphere in which they float, in the same way as some say it acts on the sea in raising the tides. The combined effects of these atmospheric tides and heat, produce winds, which drive the clouds; hence rain, snow, or hail.

It must be admitted that there is something plausible in this hypothesis, and, if it were supported by recorded observations even in a very slight degree, it would meet with ready attention from scientific men. Many persons who have read the arguments in support of the theory naturally say, "All this is perfectly clear. It explains the mode in which the moon exercises the influence attributed to her, in as simple a way as possible." Unfortunately for the makers of almanacks who venture on weather predictions, it is not sufficient to start a theory without supporting it by facts, when facts are obtainable; and observations have been recorded for a sufficient number of years, of the daily changes of the weather, to allow of the affirmative being proved if there were any real proof to be got. It cannot be denied that these observations fail to establish a very strong negative; but this is only what might be expected if the moon were altogether without influence one way or the other. The materials for making this calculation exist at various places—at Paris, Rome, Vienna, Geneva, and several other cities; the observations extend over long periods; and yet no evidence in favour of the moon exerting the influence claimed for her, can be obtained from these records. Of course it suits the pockets of almanack-makers to maintain the contrary, and it is a curious circumstance, that, although they may be wrong in their prediction as to what the weather will be on a certain day, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it is sufficient to be strikingly right in the remaining instance, to preserve the faith of the purchaser, in a robust condition. The compilers of Old Moore's almanack do not now venture to predict what the weather will be on a given day twelve months in advance, but some less popular prognosticators do. There is a M. Mathieu, whose name is continually in the French newspapers as a weather prophet, and some very remarkable instances have been published of the fulfilment of his predictions. The inhabitants of Venice will have an opportunity of verifying

his claims as a prophet, this year; for, he has predicted that one of the most fearful storms known for a century past will take place in Venetia between the 29th of November and the 3rd of December.

The belief that if it rain on St. Swithin's Day it will rain for forty days thereafter, is still very general in the rural districts, though not to the old extent. Perhaps many who may have heard the saying, may not know how it originated, or who the saint was. The information may be given in very few words. He was Bishop of Winchester, died in 862, and was buried in Winchester churchyard. At a later period he was canonised, and it was resolved to dig up his remains and place them in a shrine in the cathedral; but, when the day arrived for his removal, it began to rain so heavily that the men employed were unable to work, and it continued to rain in the same manner for forty days; hence if it rain on St. Swithin's Day it will rain for forty days afterwards, and if it be fine on that day it will continue fine for a like period. A similar belief is current in France, with respect to St. Medard and St. Gervais, and occasionally causes great discouragement among the cultivators of the soil. Dr. Berigny relates that he was once called in to prescribe for a female patient who lived in the neighbourhood of Paris. Medicine had no effect upon her, and shortly afterwards her husband fell sick, and presented identical symptoms. After a good deal of questioning he elicited from them that their crops had been bad for several years, and, it having rained on St. Medard's Day, which is on the 8th of June, they became so fearful that a similar misfortune was in store for them again, that both were rendered ill. All the efforts of the doctor to discover the origin of their superstition were in vain, but he was enabled, by a reference to the meteorological records of the Paris observatory, to ascertain that there was no foundation for it.

It is said that if timber be felled when the moon is on the increase, it will decay, and that it should always be cut when the moon is on the wane. Nobody can give a reason for this, yet the belief is common in several countries, and, what is still more strange, professed woodcutters, whose occupation is to fell timber, aver, as the actual result of their observation, that the belief is well founded. It was formerly interwoven in the Forest Code of France, and, unless expunged by recent alterations, is so still. The same opinion is said to obtain in the German forests, in Brazil, and in Yucatan. The theory given, to account for what is assumed to be a fact, is, that as the moon grows, the sap rises, and the wood, therefore, is less dense than when the moon is waning, because at that time the sap in the tree diminishes. No evidence whatever can be offered in support either of the belief or of the theory; and as a matter of fact we may rest assured that there is no more foundation for the one than the other. There are persons who will say, If you admit that the moon is capable of drawing a vast body of water to a heap, why not admit also the possibility of her attracting the moisture in a tree? To these it may be replied, that the rise or fall of the sap depends on the quantity of heat which reaches the roots of the tree, and not at all on attraction. The belief in the moon's influence as regards timber, extends to vegetables, but we believe the idea to be less generally entertained in this country than abroad, where they act upon the maxim that root crops should be planted when the moon is decreasing, and plants, such as peas, beans, and others, which bear their crops on their branches, between new and full moon. Some time ago, a body of sages had a long discussion, and wrote numerous treatises, to explain why it was that a lump of metal, if laid on water, would sink to the bottom, while, if it were beaten out into a sheet, it would float. The theories were very plausible, though they were opposed to one another. At last it occurred to one of the sages to suggest that it would be well to ascertain by actual experiment if it were really the fact that the metal would float under the circumstances stated. Accordingly, a vessel of water was brought, a sheet of the metal was laid on it, and it very soon lay at the bottom. An example of the kind is furnished by Toaldo, the Italian meteorologist, who, to account for the belief current among wine-growers, that wine, the making of which is begun in the old moon and finished in the new, is never clear nor of good quality, attributes it to the circumstance that the absence of the lunar rays, by lowering the temperature of the air, checks the fermentation. Now, if it had occurred to him to expose the most delicate thermometer to the full light of the moon shining with its greatest lustre, he would have found that the mercury was not elevated a hair's breadth; neither would it have been, if he had exposed it in the focus of her rays, concentrated by the most powerful lenses. This has been proved by actual experiment.

The power of the moon's rays to produce blindness, where a man has slept with his face exposed to them, is firmly believed in by sailors, and numerous cases have been related in which this has happened. It may be admitted that blindness has ensued where a sailor has foolishly laid himself down on the deck on his back to sleep, with his face exposed to the bright moon, in warm latitudes. But it does not follow that the blindness was caused by the moon's rays; for more probably, it was owing to the rapid radiation of heat from the exposed portions of the body, or from some other physical cause. The moon is also supposed to exercise influence on the skin by darkening it. In this matter we have the aid of photography to assure us that the moon's rays must positively be incapable of affecting the colour of the skin. Dr. Lardner, in his writings on the subject, says that the lunar rays, even when condensed by the most powerful lenses, do not darken paper which has been steeped in a solution of chloride of silver. In this statement, however, he goes rather beyond the facts of the case, as Mr. Delarue's

beautiful photographs of the moon prove; but to obtain these proofs the exposure must be a long one, whereas exposure to the solar rays for only a fraction of a second is sufficient to darken paper so prepared; and we all know by experience that the face may be exposed to the sun for hours without undergoing a very perceptible change of colour. If any darkening of the skin do really ensue from exposure to the night air, it is probably owing to the evolution of heat and moisture to the skin from the body, the passage through which is impeded by the cold night air.

Interesting as the subject may be, it would occupy far too much space to mention in detail the numerous influences attributed to the moon in addition to those already cited. It is said to cause fish to putrefy, to affect the growth of shell-fish, the hatching of eggs, the birth of infants, the marrow of animals, the weight of individuals, and the healing of wounds. The moon is also held to have a powerful influence on deranged persons, hence called lunatics. It would be singular if it were established that the moon really does affect insane persons in the manner averred by Hippocrates and other of the oldest writers on medicine. But as far as we know, no attempt has been made to prove either the affirmative or the negative of the assertion, on a scale sufficiently comprehensive to settle the question. Physicians of note have, even in recent times, given their opinion in favour of the affirmative; but the observations have been too limited to render the result of much value.

Admiral Fitzroy's forecasts of the weather are based on considerations which have no relation to the moon's influence. These are also quite a secondary matter, the principal object his predictions are intended to serve being to indicate the direction and force of the wind for only two or three days in advance. Though some may deny the invariable accuracy of these predictions, nobody can deny that they have effected much good. If they only saved a score of lives in a year (though very much greater service may be claimed for them) that would be quite sufficient to justify the very moderate expenditure of the public funds which they occasion. The system inaugurated by Admiral Fitzroy has been adopted in France and other countries. In France, semaphores have been erected on every elevated point on the coast, from Nice to Cette, and from Bayonne to Cherbourg. At each of these semaphore stations there is a comfortable residence for a non-commissioned officer, and from two to five sailors. One room is set apart for the telegraphic apparatus, which is connected by a wire with the nearest telegraph line. When a vessel approaches the coast she is signalled, and in return gives her name, to what country she belongs, whether she is in distress, and if she be in want of anything. In return she is told on what part of the coast she is, her distance from the nearest port, and at what hour the tide will serve for entering it; besides any other information she may require. By means of these stations, merchants in Paris, Lille, and other large cities, learn the arrival of their ships on the coast, hours and hours before they reach the port to which they are bound. The central office at Paris can receive from these stations an exact statement of the force and direction of the wind on all parts of the coast, and in return can inform each of probable changes which it is of interest to the seafaring population and the crews of coasting-vessels to be made acquainted with. So numerous and minute are the records kept in France and England of all matters affecting meteorological science, that it cannot be long before it will be ascertained whether fixed rules can be laid down whereby every man may judge for himself with something like certainty what the weather will be for the ensuing four-and-twenty hours or so. It is not likely, however, that the moon's influence will form an element in the settlement of the question.

MY EXCURSION AGENT.

Vast numbers of people are, for a comparatively trifling sum, conveyed from one large town to another, or from the heart of a populous neighbourhood to sylvan scenery or picturesque surroundings, and then, after a few days' revel in the unwonted peace and air and freedom, are taken back to their work-a-day life. Wanting to know something of the statistics and general management of the enormous excursion trains which, during the summer months, convey them, I sought for the longest-established manager of such expeditions, and found him at home nestling in a large newly-fronted house, under the shadow of the British Museum. The front door of this house, on which was a large brass plate duly inscribed with the excursion agent's honoured name, stood open, and by the side of a glass door within, where the visitor's bell is usually to be found, I read the word "Office," and entering, found my agent awaiting my anticipated arrival. The house is, as I afterwards learned, a private hotel, but the neighbourhood being severely respectable, and the neighbours objecting to anything so low as a public announcement on a board, my agent defers to their prejudices, describes his house as a boarding-house or receptacle for his customers while in town, and, being a Temperance man himself, conducts his establishment on strict Temperance principles. And at the very outset of our conversation my agent let me know that he was not a contractor for excursion trains or trips, that he had no responsibility, and that the work was entirely performed by the railway companies over which the trips were taken; that he made suggestions as to the routes, &c., that his profit accrued from head-money or per centage on those whom he induced to travel—in fact, that he was a traveller on commission for various railway companies, in which capacity he paid all his own advertising, generally a heavy amount.

For more than twenty-three years my agent has been at this work, arranging excursions between England and Scotland, during which time more than a million passengers have been under his charge. He has arrangements with every railway company that can be made available for Scotch trips, and sometimes begins to gather the nucleus of his company far away in the extreme west of England, then sweeping up the West Cornwall, the Cornwall and South Devon, the Bristol and Exeter, the Midland, the North Eastern, and the North British railways, he reaches Edinburgh, into which city he will pour more than a couple of thousand people by special trains within a period of twenty-four hours. My agent does not profess to make hotel arrangements for his flock, but he takes care to advise hotel-keepers of a coming influx, and he thinks that hotel-keepers in the Highlands and elsewhere are kept in order by a list of their prices being published in his programme. At some places far away, such as Bannavie, in the West Highlands by Fort William, and Braemar, at the period of the Highland gathering and games, there has been a pressure, but *something* has always been arranged, for the hotel-keepers, who at first were disposed to snub my agent as importing the wrong kind of article for them, now eagerly look for his countenance and recommendation. At Oban he had established a set of lodgings, which he found operated as a wholesome check on the hotels. To carry people, not to feed them, is my agent's business, and, as a rule, he declines to enter into any agreement for boarding and lodging his troop, but, if they wish it, he will settle all their hotel bills on the road, and present them for discharge at the end of the trip; and it speaks highly for the honesty of excursionists, when he declares that during his whole experience he has never made a bad debt amongst them, or lost a farthing by them. Had he ever been asked to lend any of them money? Frequently, and had never refused! He had lent as much as twenty pounds to one of his excursionists, an entire stranger to him, and had always been repaid. Had he taken any security? Not he! Sometimes a gentleman would offer his watch, but what did he want with a gentleman's watch? He told him to put it in his pocket again!

At Edinburgh the thousands disperse, and start off on different routes, according to the length of their holiday and the depth of their purses. Those who know the country, young men, and spirited people, start off alone. Ladies and inexperienced persons remain in the flock, and go the tour, supervised by my agent, in a party, numbering sometimes as many as two hundred and fifty, half of whom are ladies. The ordinary tickets are useful only as far as Edinburgh, but there are offices in all the large towns in Scotland at which fresh tickets for further extended trips can be obtained. And here, my agent, chuckling audibly, informs me that his tickets for coaches always have precedence, where, as is frequently the case, the vehicular supply is not equal to the tourist demand; and, the coach-proprietors being, in most cases, also hotel-proprietors, it is not to be wondered at that there is loud and frequent grumbling from the outside public at the best places in inns and on the coaches being given to the excursionists. Of these extended trips, the most favourite is that including Glasgow and Inverness, Staffa and Iona—the reason, perhaps, being that it is one of the cheapest as well as the loveliest, and with it there is connected a circumstance of great interest. For, with a certain amount of proper pride, my agent tells me that a series of improvements which, during the last few years, has been made in the condition of the poor fishing population of Staffa and Iona, is principally due to his excursionists. When they are inspecting the old cathedral at Iona, my agent takes the opportunity of introducing the subject of the natives' poverty and their hard lives, and appeals to the generosity of his flock; the excursionists, holiday-making and happy, are in proper cue for the reception of such an appeal, and respond liberally—so liberally, that by their subscriptions twenty-four fishing-boats have been built for the poor fishermen of the place. Many poor boys from these desolate regions have also been provided with comfortable situations in large towns. My agent also informs me that, during his whole experience, he has never had an accident with any of his people, that no one has ever been taken ill—nothing beyond a little over-fatigue—no serious illness, and that he has had constant cases of love-matches made up on the trip, and has taken the happy couple their honeymoon excursion in the following year.

Asked as to the character of the company usually availing itself of his tickets, my agent responded shortly, "First-rate;" but, on its being explained to him that the social status rather than the moral character of his excursionists is what is inquired after, he became more communicative. The destination of the excursion, he explained, greatly determined its numbers and the social classes from which it was made up. The trips to Edinburgh, and the shorter excursions in England, attract tradesmen and their wives, merchants' clerks away for a week's holiday, roughing it with a knapsack, and getting over an immense number of miles before they return; swart mechanics, who seem never to be able entirely to free themselves from traces of their life-long labour, but who, my agent tells me, are by no means the worst informed, and are generally the most interested about the places they visit. In the return trips from Scotland to England come many students of the schools and universities—raw-boned hard-worked youths, who, in defiance of the popular belief, actually do return to their native country for a time, probably to make a future raid into and settlement in the land whose nakedness they had spied into in early youth. As to Swiss excursions, the company is of a very different order; the Whitsuntide trip has a good deal of the Cockney element in it, and is mostly composed of very high-spirited

people, whose greatest delight in life is "having a fling," and who do Paris, and rush through France, and through Switzerland to Chamounix, compare every place they are taken to with the views which formed part of the exhibition at the Egyptian Hall, carry London everywhere about with them in dress, habits, and conversation, and rush back, convinced that they are great travellers. From these roysterers the July and September excursionists differ greatly: ushers and governesses, practical people from the provinces, and representatives of the better style of the London mercantile community who form their component parts, all travel as if impressed with the notion that they are engaged in fulfilling the wishes of a lifetime, in a pleasant duty never to be repeated. They stop at all the principal towns, visiting all the curiosities to be seen in them, and are full of discussion among themselves, proving that they are nearly all thoroughly well-up in the subject. Many of them carry books of reference with them, and nearly all take notes.

I inquired whether my agent always accompanied his flock, or whether he occasionally permitted them to wander alone. He told me that, on the Swiss trips, he made a point of being with them from the starting-place to the destination, and that he never considered himself free from responsibility (though, of course, there could be no kind of claim on him) until they were all landed in England. He should pursue this course on the Italian and all Continental excursions; but, in England, he frequently did not meet his tourists until their arrival at the first large provincial town on their route, when he "turned up promiscuously as it were." I asked him what was gained by remaining with the large body, and not rambling away by oneself? When, in reply, my agent hinted that his society and guidance were the advantages in question, he looked at me so sternly that I determined to press him with no further questions of that nature.

In the Exhibition years of '51 and '62, my agent, for the first time since 1846, had no Scotch tourist-trips, being engaged by the Midland Railway Company as manager of their Exhibition excursion-trains, in which capacity he supervised the conveyance to London of above a hundred and fifty thousand persons; and, in those years, my agent commenced business in another line. The excursionists, once landed in London, wanted somewhere to live in, and, with the usual caution of country people, distrusted the touters and advertisements greeting them on every side. Remarking this feature in the first batch which he brought up, my agent immediately engaged six private family-houses, "furnished for the season," as boarding-houses for the richer members of his flock, who, for six shillings and sixpence a day each, were provided with bed, breakfast, and a meat-tea. For the working people, he took a block of new houses, two hundred model-cottages of two or three rooms each, in the neighbourhood of Fulham, furnished them at a cost of about a thousand pounds, and charged their occupants half-a-crown a day each for bed, breakfast, and tea; dinners were not provided. About twelve thousand persons were lodged here during the season; among them three delegations of skilled workmen from Paris, fifty in number, one delegation of fifty from Turin, and two of forty each from Germany. Mr. Foster, the member for Bradford, also brought up five hundred and forty of his workpeople for a three-days' treat, and lodged them with my agent. Several of the railway companies recommended my agent's lodgings on their excursion-bills, a concession never before made.

Although my agent is perfectly amiable on all other subjects, I find one topic on which he is absolutely ferocious, and that is the supposed danger of excursion-trains. Obviously he has expected me to touch upon this point, for I no sooner utter the words "How about the danger?" when he stops me by holding up one hand, while with the other he produces a written paper which he delivers to me, and begs me to "cast an eye over." Casting two eyes over it, I find it to be a tabular statement, showing that in the thirteen years between 1851 and 1863, both inclusive, the Midland Railway Company conveyed two millions six hundred and seventy-six thousand six hundred and eighty-eight passengers by excursion trains, being an average of two hundred and five thousand nine hundred a year. My agent further informed me that the only serious accident which ever happened to an excursion train on the Midland Railway was in 1862 at Market Harborough, when one life was lost and several passengers seriously injured. This accident cost the company eighteen thousand pounds in compensations, law expenses, loss of property, &c. To ensure the safety of these excursion trains special arrangements are made, the best guards are appointed to conduct them, and in every case an experienced inspecting-guard accompanies the train to see that all the others do their duty. A programme of excursion trains all over the line is published weekly, a copy being supplied to every station-master, guard, or other responsible officer; besides which, special notices are supplied to all pointsmen and other stationary servants, in anticipation of the coming of the trains. In defence of his system, my agent also urged that all great public demonstrations were encouraged and aided by excursion trains, and that societies for the promotion of religious, social, and philanthropic objects were often indebted to the railway companies for the crowds brought together to attend them, and in many cases for pecuniary aid, in the shape of per-centage on the earnings; that excursion and tourist arrangements constituted the chief support of many watering-places, whilst the benefits derived by the humbler classes is entirely dependent on such arrangements; and that the visits paid by large numbers of excursionists to Chatsworth, and other great houses thrown open to them by their rich owners, did an immense amount of social good,

and gave rise to the growth of pleasant feeling between the benefited and the benefactors.

It was in 1855 that my agent, longing like Alexander for fresh worlds to conquer, bethought him that the Paris Exhibition, then being held, would probably prove attractive to excursionists, and thither he organised a trip, which provided for a visit to Paris, thence proceeded through France to Strasburg, and returned home down the Rhine. So successful was this experiment, that ever since he has repeated it annually, but, as he expressed himself, he "was never able to feel his way" to Switzerland till last year, when, in person, he conducted three parties (one of them three hundred strong) from England to Geneva. My agent's tickets for an excursion from London to Geneva cost, first class six guineas, second class four pounds twelve shillings and sixpence; they are available for twenty-eight days, and allow of the journey being broken at Rouen, Paris, Fontainebleau, Dijon, Maçon, and all the principal towns in Switzerland. Supplemental tickets are issued in Switzerland at twenty per cent under the usual prices, and nearly all the excursionists visit Chamounix. There are three regular Swiss trips in the course of the year, one at Whitsuntide ("not a good time," said my agent, in reply to my elevated eyebrows, "but it is merely an extension of my annual excursion to Paris"), one in the first week of July —the largest and best, principally on account of its being vacation-time in the schools, and my agent's excursion being much favoured by ushers and governesses—and one in September. On all these occasions my agent takes charge of and acts as guide, philosopher, and friend to the party. I suggested that his knowledge of foreign languages must be severely taxed. Then he smiled, and told me that was provided for by his knowing nothing but English; but that mattered little, as there was always one of his party at his elbow to explain what he suggested. His hotel arrangements are all made beforehand; in every principal town in Switzerland he has one regular hotel, with fixed prices, eight to nine francs a day for everything, attendance included, "And the best hotels too, mind you," said he, emphatically, "the best hotels—such as the Royal, at Chamounix."

Emboldened by his success, my agent confided to me his idea of, during the following summer, enabling English excursionists to see for themselves what it is that the Romans really do, and which we are all expected to emulate while we are temporary denizens of the Eternal City. In plain words, he purposes taking two special parties to Italy, one in July and one in September, over one of the Alpine passes, Mont Cenis, St. Gothard, or the Splugen, through the lake district to Como and Milan, with the option of running on to Turin, Florence, Venice, and Rome itself! He is led to expect a very large concession from the Italian railways, and has his plans pretty nearly matured.

Now surely this kind of thing is a good kind of thing, and ought to be encouraged. It is right that a hard-working man, labouring in one spot for fifty weeks in the year, should, in his fortnight's holiday, betake himself to some place as far away from and as different to his ordinary abode as lies within the reach of his purse, and this he is only able to do by the aid of such providers as my excursion agent. And each year should, if possible, be spent in a different locality. Ramsgate and Margate are good, and fresh, and wholesome; and Southend, though it would be improved if its pier were a little shorter, and its water a little salter, is good too; but as even perpetual partridge palled upon the epicure, so does a constant recurrence to one sea-side place pall upon the holiday seeker. In the excursion train he can fly to fresh fields and new pastures; he can see the glorious English cathedrals, the grey Highlands, the quaint Belgian cities, the castled Rhine crags, the glaciers, mountains, and waterfalls of Switzerland, and perhaps the blue plains of Italy, for comparatively a very trifling sum; and these seen, he will return with a fresh zest for his home and for his work, and a fresh appreciation for all that is beautiful in nature or great in history.

If these, then, be, as I fancy they are, some of the results of the work of my excursion agent—work in itself requiring clearness of intellect, and honesty and stability of purpose—I think I have a right to claim for him a position, modest but useful, in that great army of civilisation which is marching through the world.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XI. THE LIFE AT THE VILLA.

The curtains were undrawn, and the candles were lighted. All within looked just as he had so often seen it. The sick girl lay on her sofa, with her small spaniel at her feet. Miss Grainger was working at a table, and Emily sat near her sister, bending over the end of the sofa, and talking to her. "Let me see that letter again, Florry," she said, taking a letter from the passive fingers of the sick girl. "'Yes, he is sure it must have been Calvert. He says, that though the Swiss papers give the name Colnart, he is sure it was Calvert, and you remember his last words here as he went away that evening?"

"Poor fellow!" said Florence, "I am sure I have no right to bear him good will, but I am sorry for him—really sorry. I suppose, by this time, it is all over?"

"The wound was through the throat, it is said," said Miss Grainger. "But how confused the whole story is. Who is Barnard, and why did Calvert fight to save Barnard's honour?"

"No, aunt. It was to rescue Mr. Graham's, the man who was about to marry Sophia Calvert."

"Not at all, Milly. It was Graham who shot

Barnard; and then poor Calvert, horrified at his friend's fate——"

Calvert never waited for more. He saw that there was that amount of mistake and misunderstanding, which required no aid on his part, and now nothing remained but to present himself suddenly before them as a fugitive from justice, seeking shelter and protection. The rest he was content to leave to hazard.

A sharp ring at the door-bell was scarcely answered by the servant, when the man came to the drawing-room door, and made a sign to Miss Grainger.

"What is it, Giacomo? What do you mean?" she cried.

"Just one moment, signora; half a minute here," he said.

Well accustomed to the tone of secresy assumed by Italians on occasions the least important, Miss Grainger followed him outside, and there, under the glare of the hall-lamp, stood Calvert, pale, his hair dishevelled, his cravat loosened, and his coat-sleeve torn. "Save me! hide me!" said he, in a low whisper. "Can you—will you save me?"

She was one not unfitted to meet a sudden change; and, although secretly shocked, she rallied quickly, and led him into a room beside the hall. "I know all," said she. "We all knew it was your name."

"Can you conceal me here for a day—two days at furthest?"

"A week, if you need it."

"And the servant—can he be trusted?"

"To the death. I'll answer for him."

"How can you keep the secret from the girls?"

"I need not; they must know everything."

"But Florence; can she—has she forgiven me?"

"Yes, thoroughly. She scarcely knows about what she quarrelled with you. She sometimes fears that she wronged you; and Milly defends you always."

"You have heard—you know what has happened to me?"

"In a fashion; that is, we only know there has been a duel. We feared you had been wounded; and, indeed, we heard severely wounded."

"The story is too long to tell you now; enough, if I say it was all about Sophy. You remember Sophy, and a fellow who was to have married her, and who jilted her; and not only this, but boasted of the injury he had done her, and the insult he had thrown on us. A friend of mine, Barnard, a brother-officer, heard him—but why go on with this detail?—there was a quarrel and a challenge, and it was by merest accident I heard of it, and reached Basle in time. Of course, I was not going to leave to Barnard what of right belonged to me. There were, as you can imagine, innumerable complications in the matter. Rochefort, the other man's friend, and a French fellow, insisted on having a finger in the pie. The end of it was, I shot Graham; and somebody else—I believe Rochefort—put a bullet into Barnard. The Swiss laws in some cantons are severe, and we only learned too late that we had fought in the very worst of them; so I ran, I don't know how, or in what direction. I lost my head for a while, and wandered about the Vorarlberg and the Splugen for a week or two. How I find myself now here is quite a mystery to me."

There was a haggard wildness in his look that fully accorded with all he said, and the old lady felt the most honest pity for his sufferings.

"I don't know if I am perfectly safe here," said he, looking fearfully around him. "Are you sure you can conceal me, if need be?"

"Quite sure; have no fear about that. I'll tell the girls that your safety requires the greatest caution and secresy, and you'll see how careful they will be."

"Girls *will* talk, though," said he, doubtingly.

"There is the double security here — they have no one to talk to," she said, with a faint smile.

"Very true. I was forgetting how retired your life was here. Now, for the next point. What are you to tell them—I mean, how much are they to know?"

The old lady looked puzzled; she felt she might easily have replied, "If they only know no more than I can tell them, your secret will certainly be safe;" but, as she looked at his haggard cheek and feverish eye, she shrunk from renewing a theme full of distress and suffering. "Leave it to me to say something—anything which shall show them that you are in a serious trouble, and require all their secresy and sympathy."

"Yes, that may do—at least for the present. It will do at least with Emily, who bears me no ill will."

"You wrong Florence if you imagine that *she* does. It was only the other day, when, in a letter from Loyd, she read that you had left the army, she said how sorry she was you had quitted the career so suited to your abilities."

"Indeed! I scarce hoped for so much of interest in me."

"Oh, she talks continually about you; and always as of one, who only needs the guidance of some true friend to be a man of mark and distinction yet."

"It is very good, very kind of her," he said; and, for an instant, seemed lost in thought.

"I'll go back now," said Miss Grainger, "and prepare them for your coming. They'll wonder what has detained me all this while. Wait one moment for me here."

Calvert, apparently, was too much engaged with his own thoughts to hear her, and suffered her to go without a word. She was quickly back again, and beckoning him to follow her, led the way to the drawing-room.

Scarcely had Calvert passed the doorway, when the two girls met him, and each taking a hand, conducted him without a word to a sofa. Indeed, his sickly look, and the air of downright

misery in his countenance, called for all their sympathy and kindness.

"I have scarcely strength to thank you!" he said to them, in a faint voice. Though the words were addressed to both, the glance he gave towards Florence sent the blood to her pale cheeks, and made her turn away in some confusion.

"You'll have some tea, and rest yourself, and when you feel once quiet and undisturbed here, you'll soon regain your strength," said Emily, as she turned towards the tea-table. While Florence, after a few moments' hesitation, seated herself on the sofa beside him.

"Has she told you what has befallen me?" whispered he to her.

"In part—that is, something of it. As much as she could in a word or two; but do not speak of it now."

"If I do not now, Florence, I can never have the courage again."

"Then be it so," she said, eagerly. "I am more anxious to see you strong and well again, than to hear how you became wretched and unhappy."

"But if you do not hear the story from myself, Florence, and if you should hear the tale that others may tell of me—if you never know how I have been tried and tempted—with a temper that never was made for trial or temptation——"

"There, there—don't agitate yourself, or I must leave you; and, see, Milly is remarking our whispering together."

"Does she grudge me this much of your kindness?"

"No; but—there—here she comes with your tea." She drew a little table in front of him, and tried to persuade him to eat.

"Your sister has just made me a very generous promise, Emily," said he. "She has pledged herself—even without hearing my exculpation—to believe me innocent; and although I have told her that the charges that others will make against me may need some refutation on my part, she says she'll not listen to them. Is not that very noble—is it not truly generous?"

"It is what I should expect from Florence."

"And what of Florence's sister?" said he, with a half furtive glance towards her.

"I hope, nothing less generous."

"Then I am content," said he, with a faint sigh. "When a man is as thoroughly ruined as I am, it might be thought he would be indifferent to opinion in every shape—and so I am, beyond the four walls of this room; but here," and he looked at each in turn, "are the arbiters of my fate; if you will but be to me dear sisters—kind, compassionate, forgiving sisters—you will do more for this crushed and wounded heart, than all the sympathy of the whole world beside."

"We only ask to be such to you," cried Florence, eagerly; "and we feel how proud we could be of such a brother; but, above all, do not distress yourself now, by a theme so painful to touch on. Let the unhappy events of the last few weeks lie, if not forgotten, at least unmentioned, till you are calm and quiet enough to talk of them as old memories."

"Yes! but how can I bear the thought of what others may say of me—meanwhile?"

"Who are these others—we see no one, we go into no society?"

"Have you not scores of dear friends, writing by every post to ask if this atrocious duellist be 'your' Mr. Calvert, and giving such a narrative, besides, of his doings, that a galley-slave would shrink from contact with such a man? Do I not know well how tenderly people deal with the vices that are not their own? How severe the miser can be on the spendthrift, and how mercilessly the coward condemns the hot blood that resents an injury, and how gladly they would involve in shame the character that would not brook dishonour?"

"Believe me, we have very few 'dear friends' at all," said Florence, smiling, "and not one, no, not a single one, of the stamp you speak of."

"If you were only to read our humdrum letters," chimed in Emily, "you'd see how they never treat of anything but little domestic details of people who live as obscurely as ourselves. How Uncle Tom's boy has got into the Charterhouse; or Mary's baby taken the chicken-pox."

"But Loyd writes to you—and not in this strain?"

"I suspect Joseph cares little to fill his pages with what is called news," said Emily, with a laughing glance at her sister, who had turned away her head in some confusion.

"Nor would he be one likely to judge you harshly," said Florence, recovering herself. "I believe you have few friends who rate you more highly than he does."

"It is very generous of him!" said Calvert, haughtily; and then, catching in the proud glance of Florry's eyes a daring challenge of his words, he added, in a quieter tone, "I mean, it is generous of him to overlook how unjust I have been to him. It is not easy for men so different to measure each other, and I certainly formed an unfair estimate of him."

"Oh! may I tell him that you said so?" cried she, taking his hand with warmth.

"I mean to do it for myself, dearest sister. It is a debt I cannot permit another to acquit for me."

"Don't you think you are forgetting our guest's late fatigues, and what need he has of rest and quietness, girls?" said Miss Grainger, coming over to where they sat.

"I was forgetting everything in my joy, aunt," cried Florence. "He is going to write to Joseph like a dear, dear brother as he is, and we shall all be so happy, and so united."

"A brother? Mr. Calvert a brother?" said the old lady, in consternation at such a liberty with one of that mighty house, in which she had once lived as an humble dependent.

"Yes," cried he. "It is a favour I have begged, and they have not denied me."

The old lady's face flushed, and pride and shame glowed together on her cheeks.

"So we must say good night," said Calvert, rising; "but we shall have a long day's talk together, to-morrow. Who is it that defines an aunt as a creature that always sends one to bed?" whispered he to Florence.

"What made you laugh, dear?" said her sister, after Calvert had left the room.

"I forget—I didn't know I laughed—he is a strange, incomprehensible fellow—sometimes I like him greatly, and sometimes I feel a sort of dread of him that amounts to terror."

"If I were Joseph, I should not be quite unconcerned about that jumbled estimation."

"He has no need to be. They are unlike in every way," said she, gravely; and then, taking up her book, went on, or affected to go on, reading.

"I wish Aunt Grainger would not make so much of him. It is a sort of adulation that makes our position regarding him perfectly false," said Emily. "Don't you think so, dear?"

Florence, however, made no reply, and no more passed that evening between them.

Few of us have not had occasion to remark the wondrous change produced in some quiet household, where the work of domesticity goes on in routine fashion, by the presence of an agreeable and accomplished guest. It is not alone that he contributes by qualities of his own to the common stock of amusement, but that he excites those around him to efforts, which develop resources they had not, perhaps, felt conscious of possessing. The necessity, too, of wearing one's company face, which the presence of a stranger exacts, has more advantages than many wot of. The small details whose discussion forms the staple of daily talk—the little household cares and worries—have to be shelved. One can scarcely entertain their friends with stories of the cook's impertinence, or the coachman's neglect, and one has to see as they do see, that the restraint of a guest does not in reality affect the discipline of a household, though it suppress the debates and arrest the discussion.

It has been often remarked that the custom of appearing in parliament—as it was once observed—in court-dress, imposed a degree of courtesy and deference in debate, of which men in wide-awake hats and paletots are not always observant; and, unquestionably, in the little ceremonial observances imposed by the stranger's presence, may be seen the social benefits of a good breeding not marred by over-familiarity. It was thus Calvert made his presence felt at the villa. It was true he had many companionable qualities, and he had, or at least affected to have, very wide sympathies. He was ever ready to read aloud, to row, to walk, to work in the flower-garden, to sketch, or to copy music, as though each was an especial pleasure to him. If he was not as high-spirited and light-hearted as they once had seen him, it did not detract from, but rather added to the interest he excited. He was in misfortune—a calamity not the less to be compassionated that none could accurately define it: some dreadful event had occurred, some terrible consequence impended, and each felt the necessity of lightening the load of his sorrow, and helping him to bear his affliction. They were so glad when they could cheer him up, and so happy when they saw him take even a passing pleasure in the pursuits their own days were spent in.

They had now been long enough in Italy not to feel depressed by its dreamy and monotonous quietude, but to feel the inexpressible charm of that soft existence, begotten of air, and climate, and scenery. They had arrived at that stage—and it *is* a stage—in which the olive is not dusky, nor the mountain arid; when the dry course of the torrent suggests no wish for water. Life—mere life—has a sense of luxury about it, unfelt in northern lands. With an eager joy, therefore, did they perceive that Calvert seemed to have arrived at the same sentiment, and the same appreciation as themselves. He seemed to ask for nothing better than to stroll through orange groves, or lie under some spreading fig-tree, drowsily soothed by the song of the vine-dresser, or the unwearied chirp of the cicala. How much of good there must be surely in a nature pleased with such tranquil simple pleasures! thought they. See how he likes to watch the children at their play, and with what courtesy he talked to that old priest. It is clear dissipation may have damaged, but has not destroyed that fine temperament—his heart has not lost its power to feel. It was thus that each thought of him, though there was less of confidence between the sisters than heretofore.

A very few words will suffice to explain this: When Florence recovered from the shock Calvert had occasioned her on the memorable night of his visit, she had nothing but the very vaguest recollection of what had occurred. That some terrible tidings had been told her—some disastrous news in which Loyd and Calvert were mixed up; that she had blamed Calvert for rashness or indiscretion; that he had either shown a letter he ought never to have shown, or not produced one which might have averted a misfortune; and, last of all, that she herself had done or said something which a calmer judgment could not justify—all these were in some vague and shadowy shape before her, and all rendered her anxious and uneasy. On the other hand, Emily, seeing with some satisfaction that her sister never recurred to the events of that unhappy night, gladly availed herself of this silence to let them sleep undisturbed. She was greatly shocked, it is true, by the picture Calvert's representation presented of Loyd. He had never been a great favourite of her own; she recognised many good and amiable traits in his nature, but she deemed him gloomy, depressed, and a dreamer—and a dreamer, above all, she regarded as unfit to be the husband of Florence, whose ill health had only tended to exaggerate a painful and imaginative disposition. She saw, or fancied she saw, that Loyd's temperament, calm and gentle though it was, seemed

to depress her sister. His views of life were very sombre, and no effort ever enabled him to look forward in a sanguine or hopeful spirit. If, however, to these feelings an absolute fault of character were to be added—the want of personal courage—her feeling for him could no longer be even the qualified esteem she had hitherto experienced. She also knew that nothing could be such a shock to Florence, as to believe that the man she loved was a coward; nor could any station, or charm, or ability, however great, compensate for such a defect. As a matter, therefore, for grave after-thought, but not thoroughly "proven," she retained this charge in her mind, nor did she by any accident drop a hint or a word that could revive the memory of that evening.

As for Miss Grainger, only too happy to see that Florence seemed to retain no trace of that distressing scene, she never went back to it, and thus every event of the night was consigned to silence, if not oblivion. Still, there grew out of that reserve a degree of estrangement between the sisters, which each, unconscious of in herself, could detect in the other. "I think Milly has grown colder to me of late, aunt. She is not less kind or attentive, but there is a something of constraint about her I cannot fathom," would Florence say to her aunt. While the other whispered, "I wonder why Florry is so silent when we are alone together? She that used to tell me all her thoughts, and speak for hours of what she hoped and wished, now only alludes to some common-place topic—the book she has just read, or the walk we took yesterday."

The distance between them was not the less wide that each had secretly confided to Calvert her misgivings about the other. Indeed, it would have been, for girls so young and inexperienced in life, strange not to have accorded him their confidence. He possessed a large share of that quality which very young people regard as sagacity. I am not sure that the gift has got a special name, but we have all of us heard of some one "with such a good head," "so safe an adviser," "such a rare counsellor in a difficulty," "knowing life and mankind so well," and "such an aptitude to take the right road in a moment of embarrassment." The phœnix is not usually a man of bright or showy qualities; he is, on the contrary, one that the world at large has failed to recognise. If, however, by any chance he should prove to be smart, ready-witted, and a successful talker, his sway is a perfect despotism. Such was Calvert; at least such was he to the eyes of these sisters. Now, Emily had confided to him that she thought Loyd totally unworthy of Florence. His good qualities were undeniable, but he had few attractive or graceful ones; and then there was a despondent, depressed tone about him that must prove deeply injurious to one whose nature required bright and cheery companionship. Calvert agreed with every word of this.

Florence, on her side, was, meanwhile, imparting to him that Loyd was not fairly appreciated by her aunt or her sister. They deemed him very honourable, very truthful, and very moral, but they did not think highly of his abilities, nor reckon much on his success in life. In fact, though the words themselves were spared her, they told her in a hundred modes that "she was throwing herself away;" and, strange as it may read, she liked to be told so, and heard with a sort of triumphant pride that she was going to make a sacrifice of herself and all her prospects—all for "poor Joseph." To become the auditor of this reckoning required more adroitness than the other case; but Calvert was equal to it. He saw where to differ, where to agree with her. It was a contingency which admitted of a very dexterous flattery, rather insinuated, however, than openly declared; and it was thus he conveyed to her that he took the same view as the others. He knew Loyd was an excellent fellow, far too good and too moral for a mere scamp like himself to estimate. He was certain he would turn out respectable, esteemed, and all that. He would be sure to be a churchwarden, and might be a poor-law guardian; and his wife would be certain to shine in the same brightness attained by him. Then stopping, he would heave a low, faint sigh, and turn the conversation to something about her own attractions or graceful gifts. How enthusiastically the world of "society" would one day welcome them—and what a "success" awaited her whenever she was well enough and strong enough to endure its fatigue. Now, though all these were only as so many fagots to the pile of her martyrdom, she delighted to listen to them, and never wearied of hearing Calvert exalt all the greatness of the sacrifice she was about to make, and how immeasurably she was above the lot to which she was going to consign herself.

It is the drip, drip, that eats away the rock, and iteration ever so faint, will cleave its way at last; so Florry, without in the slightest degree disparaging Loyd, grew at length to believe as Calvert assured her, that "Master Joseph" was the luckiest dog that ever lived, and had carried off a prize immeasurably above his pretensions.

Miss Grainger, too, found a confessor in their guest: but it will spare the reader some time if I place before him a letter which Calvert wrote to one of his most intimate friends a short time after he had taken up his abode at the villa. The letter will also serve to connect some past events with the present now before us.

The epistle was addressed Algernon Drayton, Esq., Army and Navy Club, London, and ran thus:

"My dear Algy,—You are the prince of 'our own correspondents,' and I thank you, 'imo corde,' if that be Latin for it, for all you have done for me. I defy the whole Bar to make out, from your narrative, who killed who, in that affair at Basle. I know, after the third reading of it, I fancied that I had

been shot through the heart, and then took post-horses for Zurich. It was and is a masterpiece of the bewildering imbroglio style. Cultivate your great gifts, then, my friend. You will be a treasure to the court of Cresswell, and the most injured of men or the basest of seducers will not be able at the end of a suit to say which must kneel down and ask pardon of the other. I suppose I ought to say I'm sorry for Barnard, but I can't. No, Algy, I cannot. He was an arrant snob, and, if he had lived, he'd have gone about telling the most absurd stories and getting people to believe them, just on the faith of his stupidity. If there is a ridiculous charge in the world, it is that of 'firing before one's time,' which, to make the most of it, must be a matter of seconds, and involves, besides, a question as to the higher inflammability of one's powder. I don't care who made mine, but I know it did its work well. I'm glad, however, that you did not deign to notice that contemptible allegation, and merely limited yourself to what resulted. Your initials and the stars showered over the paragraph, are in the highest walk of legerdemain, and I can no more trace relatives to antecedents, than I can tell what has become of the egg I saw Houdin smash in my hat.

"I know, however, I mustn't come back just yet. There is that shake-of-the-headiness abroad that makes one uncomfortable. Fortunately, this is no sacrifice to me. My debts keep me out of London, just as effectually as my morals. Besides this, my dear Algy, I'm living in the very deepest of clover, domesticated with a maiden aunt and two lovely nieces, in a villa on an Italian lake, my life and comforts being the especial care of the triad. Imagine an infant-school occupied in the care of a young tiger of the spotted species, and you may, as the Yankees say, realise the situation. But they seem to enjoy the peril of what they are doing, or they don't see it, I can't tell which.

"'Gazetted out,' you say; 'Meno male,' as they say here. I might have been promoted, and so tempted to go back to that land of Bores, Bearers, and Bungalores, and I am grateful to the stumble that saves me from a fall. But you ask, What do I mean to do? and I own I do not see my way to anything. Time was when gentleman-riding, coach-driving, or billiards, were on a par with the learned professions; but, my dear Drayton, we have fallen upon a painfully enlightened age, and every fellow can do a little of everything.

"You talk of my friends? You might as well talk of my Three per Cents. If I had friends, it would be natural enough they should help me to emigrate as a means of seeing the last of me; but I rather suspect that my relatives, who by a figure of speech represent the friends aforesaid, have a lively faith that some day or other the government will be at the expense of my passage—that it would be quite superfluous in them to provide for it.

"You hint that I might marry, meaning thereby marry with money; and, to be sure, there's Barnard's widow with plenty of tin, and exactly in that stage of affliction that solicits consolation; for when the heart is open to sorrow, Love occasionally steps in before the door closes. Then, a more practical case. One of these girls here—the fortune is only fifteen thousand—I think over the matter day and night, and I verily believe I see it in the light of whatever may be the weather at the time: very darkly on the rainy days; not so gloomy when the sky is blue and the air balmy.

"Do you remember that fellow that I stayed behind for at the Cape, and thereby lost my passage, just to quarrel with—Headsworth? Well, a feeling of the same sort is tempting me sorely at this time. There is one of these girls, a poor delicate thing, very pretty, and coquettish in her way, has taken it into her wise head to prefer a stupid loutish sort of young sucking barrister to me, and treats me with an ingenious blending of small compassion and soft pity to console my defeat. If you could ensure my being an afflicted widower within a year, I'd marry her, just to show her the sort of edged tool she has been playing with. I'm often half driven to distraction by her impertinent commiseration. I tried to get into a row with the man, but he would not have it. Don't you hate the fellow that won't quarrel with you, worse even than the odious wretch who won't give you credit?

"I might marry the sister, I suppose, to-morrow; but that alone is a reason against it. Besides, she is terribly healthy; and though I have lost much faith in consumption, from cases I have watched in my own family, bad air and bad treatment will occasionally aid its march. Could you, from such meagre data as these, help me with a word of advice? for I do like the advice of an unscrupulous dog like yourself—so sure to be practical. Then there is no cant between men like us—we play 'cartes sur table.'

"The old maid who represents the head of this house has been confidentially sounding me as to an eligible investment for some thousands which have fallen in from a redeemed mortgage. I could have said, 'Send them to me, and you shall name the interest yourself;' but I was modest, and did not. I bethought me, however, of a good friend, one Algy Drayton, a man of large landed property, but who always wants money for drainage. Eh, Algy! Are your lips watering at the prospect? If so, let your ingenuity say what is to be the security.

"Before I forget it, ask Pearson if he has any more of that light Amontillado. It is the only thing ever sets me right, and I have been poorly of late. I know I must be out of sorts, because all day yesterday I was wretched and miserable at my misspent life and squandered abilities. Now, in my healthier moments, such thoughts never cross me. I'd have been honest if Nature had dealt fairly with me; but the younger son of a younger brother starts too heavily weighted to win by anything but a 'foul.' You understand this well, for we are

in the same book. We each of us pawned our morality very early in life, and never were rich enough to redeem it. A propos of pledges, is your wife alive? I lost a bet about it some time ago, but I forget on which side. I backed my opinion.

"Now, to sum up. Let me hear from you about all I have been asking; and, though I don't opine it lies very much in your way, send me any tidings you can pick up — to his disadvantage, of course—of Joseph Loyd, Middle Temple. You know scores of attorneys who could trace him. Your hint about letter-writing for the papers is not a bad one. I suppose I could learn the trick, and do it at least as well as some of the fellows whose lucubrations I read. A political surmise, a spicy bit of scandal, a sensation trial, wound up with a few moral reflections upon how much better we do the same sort of things at home. Isn't that the bone of it? Send me—don't forget it—send me some news of Rocksley. I want to hear how they take all that I have been doing of late for their happiness. I have half of a letter written to Soph—a sort of mild condolence, blended with what the serious people call profitable reflections and suggestive hints that her old affection will find its way back to me one of these days, and that when the event occurs, her best course will be to declare it. I have reminded her, too, that I laid up a little love in her heart when we parted, just as shrewd people leave a small balance at their bankers' as a title to re-open their account at a future day.

"Give Guy's people a hint that it's only wasting postage-stamps to torment me with bills. I never break the envelope of a dun's letter, and I know them as instinctively as a detective does a swell-mobsman. What an imaginative race these duns must be. I know of no fellow, for the high flights of fancy, to equal one's tailor or bootmaker. As to the search for the elixir vitæ, it's a dull realism after the attempts I have witnessed for years to get money out of myself.

"But I must close this; here is Milly, whose taper fingers have been making cigarettes for me all the morning, come to propose a sail on the lake!—fact Algy!—and the wolf is going out with the lambs, just as prettily and as decorously as though his mother had been a ewe and cast 'sheep's eyes' at his father. Address me, Orta, simply, for I don't wish it to be thought here that my stay is more than a day by day matter. I have all my letters directed to the post-office.

"Yours, very cordially,
"Harry Calvert."

The pleasant project thus passingly alluded to was not destined to fulfilment; for as Calvert with the two sisters were on their way to the lake, they were overtaken by Miss Grainger, who insisted on carrying away Calvert, to give her his advice upon a letter she had just received. Obeying with the best grace he could, and which really did not err on the score of extravagance, he accompanied the old lady back to the house, somewhat relieved, indeed, in mind to learn that the letter she was about to show him in no way related to him nor his affairs.

"I have my scruples, Mr. Calvert, about asking your opinion in a case where I well know your sympathies are not in unison with our own; but your wise judgment and great knowledge of life are advantages I cannot bring myself to relinquish. I am well aware that whatever your feelings or your prejudices, they will not interfere with that good judgment."

"Madam, you do me honour; but, I hope, no more than justice."

"You know of Florry's engagement to Mr. Loyd?" she asked, abruptly, as though eager to begin her recital; and he bowed. "Well, he left this so hurriedly about his father's affairs, that he had no time to settle anything, or, indeed, explain anything. We knew nothing of his prospects or his means, and he just as little about my niece's fortune. He had written, it is true, to his father, and got a most kind and affectionate answer, sanctioning the match, and expressing fervent wishes for his happiness—— Why do you smile, Mr. Calvert?"

"I was only thinking of the beauty of that benevolence that costs nothing; few things are more graceful than a benediction—nothing so cheap."

"That may be so. I have nothing to say to it," she rejoined, in some irritation. "But old Mr. Loyd's letter was very beautiful, and very touching. He reminded Joseph that he himself had married on the very scantiest of means, and that though his life had never been above the condition of a very poor vicar, the narrowness of his fortune had not barred his happiness. I'd like to read you a passage——"

"Pray do not. You have given me the key-note, and I feel as if I could score down the whole symphony."

"You don't believe him, then?"

"Heaven forfend! All I would say is, that between a man of his temperament and one of mine discussion is impossible; and if this be the letter on which you want my opinion, I frankly tell you I have none to give."

"No, no! this is not the letter; here is the letter I wish you to read. It has only come by this morning's post, and I want to have your judgment on it before I speak of it to the girls."

Calvert drew the letter slowly from its envelope, and, with a sort of languid resignation, proceeded to read it. As he reached the end of the first page, he said, "Why, it would need a lawyer of the Ecclesiastical Court to understand this. What's all this entangled story about irregular induction, and the last incumbent, and the lay impropriator?"

"Oh, you needn't have read that! It's the poor old gentleman's account of his calamity; how he has lost his vicarage, and is going down to a curacy in Cornwall. Here," said she, pointing to another page, "here is where you are to begin; 'I might have borne——'"

"Ah, yes!" said he, reading aloud; "'I might have borne up better under this misfortune if it had not occurred at such a critical moment of my poor boy's fate, for I am still uncertain what effect these tidings will have produced on you. I shall no longer have a home to offer the young people, when from reasons of health or economy, or relaxation, they would like to have left the town and come down to rusticate with us. Neither will it be in my power to contribute—even in the humble shape I had once hoped—to their means of living. I am, in short, reduced to the very narrowest fortune, nor have I the most distant prospect of any better: so much for myself. As for Joseph, he has been offered, through the friendly intervention of an old college companion, an appointment at the Calcutta Bar. It is not a lucrative nor an important post, but one which they say will certainly lead to advancement and future fortune. Had it not been for his hopes, hopes—which have latterly constituted the very spring of his existence—such an opening as this would have been welcomed with all his heart; but now the offer comes clouded with all the doubts as to how you may be disposed to regard it. Will you consent to separate from the dear girl you have watched over with such loving solicitude for years? Will she herself consent to expatriation and the parting from her sister and yourself? These are the questions which torture his mind, and leave him no rest day or night! The poor fellow has tried to plead his cause in a letter—he has essayed a dozen times—but all in vain. "My own selfishness shocks me," he says, "when I read over what I have written, and see how completely I have forgotten everything but my own interests." If he remain at home, by industry and attention he may hope, in some six or seven years, to be in a position to marry; but six or seven years are a long period of life, and sure to have their share of vicissitudes and casualties. Whereas, by accepting this appointment, which will be nearly seven hundred a year, he could afford at once to support a wife, of course supposing her to submit willingly to the privations and wants of such straitened fortunes. I have offered to tell his story for him—that story he has no strength to tell himself—but I have not pledged to be his advocate; for, while I would lay down my life to secure his happiness, I cannot bring myself to urge for his sake, what might be unfair or ungenerous to exact from another.

"'Though my son's account of your niece leaves us nothing more to ask or wish for in a daughter, I am writing in ignorance of many things I would like to know. Has she, for instance, the energy of character that would face a new life in a new and far away land? Has she courage—has she health for it? My wife is not pleased at my stating all these reasons for doubt; but I am determined you shall know the worst of our case from ourselves, and discover no blot we have not prepared you for.'" Calvert muttered something here, but too inaudibly to be heard, and went on reading: "'When I think that poor Joe's whole happiness will depend on what decision your next letter will bring, I have only to pray that it may be such as will conduce to the welfare of those we both love so dearly. I cannot ask you to make what are called "sacrifices" for us; but I entreat you let the consideration of affection weigh with you, not less than that of worldly interests, and also to believe that when one has to take a decision which is to influence a lifetime, it is as safe to take counsel from the heart as from the head—from the nature that is to feel, as from the intellect that is to plan.'

"I think I have read enough of this," said Calvert, impatiently. "I know the old gent's brief perfectly. It's the old story: first gain a girl's affections, and let her friends squabble, if they dare, about the settlements. He's an artful old boy, that vicar! but I like him, on the whole, better than his son, for though he does plead in formâ pauperis, he has the fairness to say so."

"You are very severe, Mr. Calvert. I hope you are too severe," said the old lady, in some agitation.

"And what answer are you going to give him?" asked he, curtly.

"That is exactly the point on which I want your advice; for though I know well you are no friend to young Loyd, I believe you to be our sincere well-wisher, and that your judgment will be guided by the honest feelings of regard for us."

Without deigning to notice this speech, he arose, and walked up and down the room, apparently deep in thought. He stopped at last, and said, abruptly, "I don't presume to dictate to you in this business; but if I were the young lady's guardian, and got such a letter as this, my reply would be a very brief one."

"You'd refuse your consent?"

"Of course I would! Must your niece turn adventuress, and go off to Heaven knows where, with God knows whom? Must she link her fortunes to a man who confessedly cannot face the world at home, but must go to the end of the earth for a bare subsistence? What is there in this man himself, in his character, station, abilities, and promise, that are to recompense such devotion as this? And what will your own conscience say to the first letter from India, full of depression and sorrow, regrets shadowed forth, if not avowed openly, for the happy days when you were all together, and contrasts of that time, with the dreary dulness of an uncheered existence? *I* know something of India, and I can tell you it is a country where life is only endurable by splendour. Poverty in such a land is not merely privation, it is to live in derision and contempt. Every one knows how many rupees you have per month, and you are measured by your means in everything. That seven hundred a year, which sounds plausibly enough, is something like two hundred at home, if so much. Of course you can override all these considerations, and, as the vicar says, 'Let the heart take precedence of the head.' *My* cold and worldly counsels will not stand

comparison with *his* fine and generous sentiments, no more than I could make as good a figure in the pulpit as he could. But, perhaps, as a mere man of the world, I am his equal; though there are little significant hints in that very letter that show the old parson is very wide awake."

"I never detected them," said she, curtly.

"Perhaps not, but rely upon one thing. It was not such a letter as he would have addressed to a man. If *I*, for instance, had been the guardian instead of you, the whole tone of the epistle would have been very different."

"Do you think so?"

"Think so! I know it. I had not read ten lines till I said to myself, 'This was meant for very different eyes from mine.'"

"If I thought that——"

"Go on," said he; "finish, and let me hear what you would say or do, when arrived at the conclusion I have come to."

So far, however, from having come to any decision, she really did not see in the remotest distance anything to guide her to one.

"What would you advise me to do, Mr. Calvert?" said she, at last, and after a pause of some time.

"Refer him to me; say the point is too difficult for you; that while your feelings for your niece might overbear all other considerations, those very feelings might be the sources of error to you. You might, for instance, concede too much to the claim of affection; or, on the other hand, be too regardful of the mere worldly consideration. Not that, on second thoughts, I'd enter upon this to him. I'd simply say a friend in whom I repose the fullest confidence, has consented to represent me in this difficult matter. Not swayed as I am by the claims of affection, he will be able to give a calmer and more dispassionate judgment than I could. Write to Mr. Calvert, therefore, who is now here, and say what the mere business aspect of the matter suggests to you to urge. Write to him frankly, as to one who already is known to your son, and has lived on terms of intimacy with him. His reply will be mine."

"Is not that a very cold and repelling answer to the good vicar's letter?"

"I think not, and I suspect it will have one good effect. The parson's style will become natural at once, and you'll see in what a very different fashion he'll write when the letter is addressed to me."

"What will Florence say?"

"Nothing, if she knows nothing. And, of course, if you intend to take her into your counsels, you must please to omit *me*. I'm not going to legislate for a young lady's future with herself to vote in the division!"

"But what's to become of me, if you go away in the middle of the negotiation, and leave me to finish it?"

"I'll not do so. I'll pledge my word to see you through it. It will be far shorter than you suspect. The vicar will not play out his hand when he sees his adversary. You have nothing to do but write as I have told you; leave the rest to me."

"Florence is sure to ask me what the vicar has written; she knows that I have had his letter."

"Tell her it is a purely business letter; that his son having been offered a colonial appointment, he wishes to ascertain what your fortune is, and how circumstanced, before pledging himself further. Shock her a little about their worldliness, and leave the remainder to time."

"But Joseph will write to her meanwhile, and disabuse her of this."

"Not completely. She'll be annoyed that the news of the colonial place did not come first from himself; she'll be piqued into something not very far from distrust; she'll show some vexation when she writes; but don't play the game before the cards are dealt. Wait, as I say—wait and see. Meanwhile, give me the vicar's note, for I dread your showing it to Florry, and if she asks for it, say you sent it to Henderson—isn't that your lawyer's name?—in London, and told him to supply you with the means of replying to it."

Like a fly in a cobweb, Miss Grainger saw herself entangled wherever she turned, and though perhaps in her secret heart she regretted having ever called Calvert to her counsels, the thing was now done, and could not be undone.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXIV. LILY IS LEFT ALONE IN A STRANGE COUNTRY.

IN the court-yard of the post-office, not far from the hotel, Lily was introduced to an enormous machine—like a hackney-coach, an omnibus, and a post-chaise, stuck together—painted yellow, and surmounted in the front by a kind of hackney-cab, and in the rear by a tremendous pile of luggage covered with a tarpaulin. The formidable edifice was mounted on very heavy wheels, and to it were harnessed, by very ragged looking ropes, six horses, three abreast, and as ragged as the cords which confined them. This was the Paris diligence belonging to the Messageries Royales of Messrs. Lafitte, Caillard, and Company, and such of my courteous readers who may have attained middle-age, and went to school in France, have probably journeyed by this same lumbering, lagging, and comfortless conveyance.

The hackney-coach compartment, which held six, was called the intérieur; the omnibus-looking compartment, which afforded want of accommodation for eight passengers, went by the name of the rotonde; and that portion of the vehicle which has been likened to a post-chaise, and in which three persons could sit, sufficiently ill at ease, was entitled the coupé. The lady had retained the whole of this coupé: one place for herself, another for Lily, and the third for her temper; although it is questionable whether the entire diligence would have been big enough to hold that. After a time, an individual in a semi-military uniform, with an embroidered badge on his arm, and a laced cap and a peak to it, who was the conducteur or guard of the machine, came to the window and read off the passengers' names from a way-bill; then a tall gendarme in a cocked-hat and jack-boots, who had come, it is to be presumed, to see Lily off, and to ascertain by ocular inspection whether she was carrying an infernal machine to Paris, to blow up the Orleans dynasty withal, waved one of his buck-skin gauntlets in token of dismissal; the postilion, a frightful-looking creature, in monstrous jack-boots, and with a quantity of parti-coloured ribbons, all very dirty, streaming from his hat, cracked his whip, and began to scream out some abusive language to his horses, and the top-heavy caravan jolted out of the post-office yard.

They were swaying and staggering over the ill-paved streets of the town, when a carriage which Lily had seen before, passed them at a steadily rapid pace. It was the green berline which had been lashed to the deck of the Harlequin, and reclining in it was the invalid gentleman with the yellow face. There was room in the rumble for M. Franz Stimm, and there his place properly was; but he was a confidential courier, and, the carriage being broad, occupied a place by his master's side.

"There is that little girl again," the sallow man remarked, fretfully, as they passed the diligence.

"She is ver graziosa; I gif her some joggolate, my lord generale," returned the courier.

"Don't my lord me, Stimm," peevishly exclaimed the invalid; "nor general me either. I never was the one, and I'm sick of having been the other. I can't get that little girl's face out of my head. It haunts me. Who can she be?"

"Bah! bas grand zhose," Monsieur Stimm observed, in reply. "Za mère elle est oune gatine; ouf! oune diablesse. I zink I zee her somewhere in de zeatre, dancing on de cord or jumping on de horse. Haoup-là!"

But the diligence was by this time many yards behind, and the invalid, pettishly asking for some orange-flower, and being, as usual, persuaded to take what Monsieur Franz Stimm termed "gognac," forgot, for the time, the bright little face which, he said, had haunted him.

The occupants of the coupé travelled all that day along dusty roads, for the most part bordered with tall trees, like walking-sticks surmounted by birch-brooms. The perspective was not enchanting. The fields were of an ugly ashen green, and divided by ditches, not hedges. There were no pretty villages by the roadside; what buildings there were, did not get beyond tumbledown stone hovels, at the doors of which toothless old women, with their heads bandaged up, sat at spinning-wheels, or dirty children sprawled. From time to time they met a man walking, in a blouse and sabots, powdered with dust from head to foot: a knapsack on his back, and a quantity of ribbons streaming from his hat. Sometimes he looked wobegone, and

blubbered; sometimes he whistled cheerily, and was defiant, and drunk. This was Jean Pierre, or Gros Guillaume, the conscript who had drawn a bad number, and was trudging to the regimental depôt. Frequently, on coming to the base of a steep hill, the diligence would stop, and the conducteur, coming to the coupé door, politely invite them to descend. Then they would have to walk up hill, toiling after the diligence, for half a mile or so; but there were no wild flowers by the way. There were loathsome beggars instead, who, in twos and threes, dotted the highway from Boulogne to Paris, flaunting their tatters, exhibiting their sores, holding up on high their cadaverous babies, and, in droning, monotonous tone, repeating: "Charité, s'il vous plaît! Petit sou Anglais! Petit morceau de biscuit Anglais!" A recent change in the order of things in Paris has had, at least, one gratifying result;—the roadside beggars have disappeared.

They stayed half an hour, at five o'clock, to dine at Abbeville, where there was a noisy crowded table d'hôte. Lily could eat nothing, save a spoonful of soup, and a slice from an enormous melon which decorated the table. Five francs a head were charged for this repast, which gave the lady an opportunity of storming at Lily, at herself, and at the world, for the next twenty miles. A little way out of Abbeville, some men were singeing the bristles off a newly slaughtered pig, in a field; and the odour of this porcine suttee borne on the breeze, gave Lily a notion of incipient crackling, and made her almost hungry.

They went jogging, rumbling, clattering on, the postilion cracking his whip and screaming, and the horses, not to be behindhand, screaming too. They travelled all night; but Lily could sleep but little for the incessant jolting. At about six in the morning they stopped at a pretty large town, where, from an inn-door, a shock-headed barefooted girl brought out to the coupé two white bowls of scalding hot coffee, with a liberal allowance of milk therein, and two huge slices of bread. Lily was able to breakfast very heartily, and, though her feet felt chill and numbed, was in better spirits by the time they arrived at St. Denis—about eleven o'clock—when she was told that they were within six miles of Paris.

The lady's temper had been throughout detestable, and she had seldom spoken to Lily, save to scold her. As they approached the capital, however, her face brightened, and, at Montmartre, she condescended to inform the child that Paris was the only place worth living in in the whole world.

"Shall we be very happy there?" asked the little girl, with a timid look.

"We?" repeated the lady, coldly. "You are going to school. Do you think I am a little bambine, to learn lessons and be put in the corner en pénitence, as you will be if you are not sage? I pray you not to repeat such absurdity. There will be one Paris for me, and another Paris for you, ma petite."

They entered by the Porte St. Denis, then a barrier, where sundry custom-house officers came to the window, asking whether there was anything to declare, and poking long spiked sticks into the luggage beneath the tarpaulin. They took away a bottle of wine from a stout lady in the intérieur, and a veal-pie from a countryman in the rotonde, the possessors of those edibles and potables having been foolish enough not to uncork the one, nor cut a slice out of the other. For, in those days, as now, everything eatable or drinkable, non-entamé, paid octroi duty, or gate-tolls, to the good city of Paris.

The diligence clattered up and down several stony streets, with no pavements, with no gas-lamps, but, instead, clumsy lanterns suspended to the centre of ropes slung across from house to house, and crowded with people who seemed to walk, preferentially, in the gutter. A great many of the men wore blue shirts above their clothes, and numbers of the women had white caps, in lieu of bonnets, on their heads. Lily thought the whole scene very unlike Stockwell.

Arrived at a large coach-office in a street called Grenelle Saint-Honoré, and in the yard of which half a dozen machines, as huge, as yellow, and as clumsy as the Boulogne diligence, were slumbering without horses, and where a score of postilions and conductors were smoking pipes and lounging about, they found another custom-house, and had to undergo a fresh examination of luggage. Then the lady's passport was again inspected, and at last taken away from her altogether, with an intimation that she might reclaim it ten days thence at the Préfecture of Police. The lady engaged a carriage hung very close to the ground, and drawn by two little white horses, whose harness was very ragged, and whose knees were very bandy. The driver wore a glazed hat, a red waistcoat, and had a redder face.

Up and down more narrow stony streets, and then they crossed a wide and magnificent thoroughfare skirted by lofty mansions and splendid shops, with wide branching trees along the intervals of the foot-pavement, and thronged with people, and horses, and carriages.

"Oh, what a beautiful street!" cried the child. "Do look at the carriages, and the shops, and those flags; and, oh, here is a whole regiment of soldiers!"

"Beautiful!" echoed the lady, with complaisant disdain. "I should think so, little ignoramus. It is the finest street in the world. It is the Boulevard des Italiens."

But they soon left it, and dived into more streets, broader, newer, and cleaner than the filthy lanes of the old quarter of the city. Then the houses grew fewer, and the gardens more frequent, and the coachman, turning in his boot, called through the window:

"Was it the Rue de la Pépinière, or the Rue de Courcelles, the bourgeoise said?"

"De Courcelles, ganache!" replied the countess, addressed as bourgeoise.

"Thanks for the compliment," the driver, who was a good-natured fellow, replied. "Je vous la souhaite belle et bonne, madame. Am I to have anything else by way of pour-boire? Hahoheup! Ostrogoth of a rhinoceros!" The latter speech was addressed to one of the white horses, which was essaying to lunch on his neighbour's near blinker. And they went on again.

They reached a street where there were no houses to be seen, only a double succession of staring white stone-walls, of different heights, and, here and there, a heavy green door. At one of these doors, the number five, the carriage drew up. The coachman rang a bell which dangled by a long wire from the wall, and this was presently answered by a lad in a shabby livery, and whose face was fearfully scarred with the small-pox. Lily's trunk was alone removed, and the coachman was ordered to wait. The pock-marked lad conducted them across a dreary court-yard, in the interstices of whose stones rank dank herbage grew, up a broken flight of mildewed stone steps, across a bare hall, or vestibule, papered green, which smelt very mouldy and felt very damp, and so into a dismal saloon with an oak floor, laid in a pattern like a chess-board, and which was so highly polished, that Lily slipped on her entrance, and was very near tumbling down.

She was bidden to sit on a vast chintz-coloured sofa, and remained there, frightened, and listening to the harsh ticking of an or-molu-clock on the mantelshelf. The lady left her at the expiration of ten minutes, and Lily thought she could hear voices in an adjoining apartment. She remained on the sofa for another ten minutes, and then she heard a door bang violently. Through one of the tall windows (which reached almost to the ground) she saw the form of the handsome lady retreating across the court-yard. The shabby lad opened the door for her. She ascended the carriage. She was gone. Lily's heart sank within her. She was now left Quite Alone indeed.

CHAPTER XXV. LA PENSION MARCASSIN.

The child's hand was on the handle of the lock; but it turned on the other side, and a person came in.

She was tall and shapely, and had once been handsome; but she had bidden farewell to middle age, and, without pleading guilty to imminent antiquity, would have had little chance, if arraigned, of averting a true bill. Of her good looks, only enough was left to make her angry at the remembrance of having been comely. Her hands, attenuated and long fingered though they were, retained their symmetry, and were dazzlingly white. But they were heartless-looking hands—cruel hands, more accustomed, if manual expression can be eloquent, to give buffets than to give charity. The nails looked as though they had been bitten, not pared. Her hair, iron, not silver grey, was disposed in plain bands beneath a rigid cap of point lace if you will, but hard and spiky, as though it had been wrought out of some white metal. She was tall, very tall, and was draped in one long black silk dress, more like a pillow-case than a gown, falling in few folds, and those stiff and angular. A great cross of dull gold was at her neck, and that was all the ornament she wore. Her voice was chilly and windy. The words came as though a door had been slightly opened, a draught of cold air let in, and then closed.

"I am Mademoiselle Marcassin," she said.

She spoke in English, but with a foreign accent, fainter and harder than that which marked the speech of the strange lady. Her words fell like drops of iced water upon Lily's trembling heart.

"Stand before me, here, in the light, so," continued Mademoiselle Marcassin. "Listen to me with all your attention."

She placed her white thin hands on the child's shoulders, turned her round, and dressed her up, in a military manner, by the window. Anon she drew aside a louvre shutter, and the whole daylight came in, white and almost blinding.

"I wish you to see me very plainly," she remarked. "Look in my eyes. Mark them well. Tell me if they look soft and yielding."

Lily did mark them. She was too frightened to say what she thought, but to her mind those eyes were grey, hard, baleful, merciless.

"I am your schoolmistress," went on Mademoiselle. "You are sent here to be taught, and to be punished if you misconduct yourself. Here you will learn what discipline is. Silence!" Lily had no more idea of uttering a word than of dancing a gavotte, or setting the house on fire. "The first lesson you are to learn must be to hold your tongue."

"This is the last time," she pursued, "that I shall speak to you in English. You had better forget that I ever addressed you in that tongue. I shall address you in French when I think you have been long enough here to comprehend me, and if you do not understand, you will be punished. What do you know? I mean, what have you learned away there in England?"

With much blushing and faltering, Lily went over the scant schedule of her book-learning. Mademoiselle Marcassin heard her in contemptuous silence.

"As ignorant as a squirrel," she resumed, when the child had done, "and, I dare say, quite as restless and troublesome. Here you will be taught as well as tamed. We cannot begin too soon."

She rang a bell, and in a few minutes—passed by Lily in something closely approximating to breathless terror—a low tap came to the door, and a lady, who looked, as to garb and demeanour, gold cross and all, a duplicate edition of Mademoiselle Marcassin, only she was somewhat younger, shorter, and stouter, came into the room.

"This," said the lady superior of the establishment, "is Mademoiselle Espréménil, the head governess. She will take you into the schoolroom and tell you your duties. In all things she is to be obeyed even as I am. Woe be to you if you are insubordinate. Now go."

And, without another word, she turned on her heel and disappeared. The lady addressed as Mademoiselle Espréménil took Lily's hand, and, in equal silence, led her away.

They traversed the hall and another room, which was Mademoiselle Marcassin's private salle à manger. Lily noticed that all this part of the house, though it was bare and comfortless, was very stately and polished, and had a curious pervading odour of cold stones—for cold stones have an odour—and beeswax. But when the head governess pushed aside a green baize door, and they crossed a high walled gravelled playground, they entered upon quite another region.

Everything was barer, everything more comfortless; everything, moreover, had a squalid, frowning, prison-like aspect. From the moment Lily entered that house to the moment she left it, she could not divest herself of the notion that she had *done something*, that she had committed some crime, and that she was in tribulation for it, under the especial auspices of Mademoiselle Marcassin and her subordinates.

There might have been twenty girls, between the ages of ten and fifteen, in the first whitewashed schoolroom they entered. It was a frightful looking room; its sepulchral whiteness relieved only by the dingy black of the transverse desks, a big black stove in one corner, from which a blacker pipe crawled along the ceiling like a serpent, and a black board supported by a double frame—a kind of elephantine easel.

All these girls looked as though they had done something, and were much disturbed in their minds in consequence. The teachers, however, of whom there were two present, seemed to be of a contrary opinion, and to hold that they had done nothing, and did not mean to do anything, at least of what was good. For which reason they continuously girded at the twenty pupils.

"The first-class," remarked Mademoiselle Espréménil, dryly, to Lily, as she marched her through. She made the observation in a tone similar to that which a female turnkey might use in pointing out the refractory ward.

A girl with a merry face and wavy black hair could not resist the temptation, as Lily passed her, of pulling slyly at her dress, and making (in perfect good nature, be it understood) a face at her. But the quick eye of the head governess caught the grimace in transit, and she was down on the merry one in a moment, like Thor's hammer.

"Five bad points for Mademoiselle Marygold," she exclaimed; and then, turning to the culprit, continued, "you are becoming a Rothschild in bad points. Beware of the day of reckoning."

Mademoiselle Marygold set up a whimper, as a governess—whose profile was so like a hatchet, that when she bent over the girls at their writing lessons, they were apt to feel the backs of their necks to make sure that they were safe on their shoulders—chalked five crosses against the Marygoldian name on the black board. She had a tremendous balance of black marks already in her disfavour.

"The second class room," said the head governess, as they entered another apartment, somewhat smaller than the first, but holding an equal number of scholars.

None of the girls ventured beyond a quick and furtive moment of looking up as the two passed through. At the door was a young lady aged apparently about eleven, with a very dirty face, the result of her having rubbed her countenance with inky hands, and the carbon therein having mingled with the tears which streamed from her eyes. This young lady was on her knees in a corner by the door; and very uncomfortable in that attitude she seemed to be. There was reason enough for it, as she was kneeling on a square wooden ruler, the sharpest edge upwards, specially provided for the mortification of her flesh. And, furthermore, the young lady's head was decorated with an enormous fool's cap of grey paper, decorated at either side by lengthy bows or ears of black crape, and which gave the poor little thing somewhat of the appearance of Mr. Punch in half mourning.

"Again!" said the head governess, regarding this forlorn little personage with severe disdain. "Again, Mélanie! Thou goest the way for the Prix Monthyon, truly. A pretty Rosière, my faith! She is in penitence," she continued, turning to Lily. "She passes half her time in abject degradation."

Here a fresh burst of sobs came from the unhappy Mélanie, whose face, as it could not be much blacker, became absolutely fairer for the outbreak; for the tears traced little white channels for themselves on her cheeks till she scumbled them all together in a muddy neutral tint. They left this luckless Niobe, and went into another schoolroom.

It was the largest of all, and there were perhaps forty pupils in it. But they were all very little girls—none of them older, and many younger, than Lily. Likewise there were no desks in this room, save those which served as rostra for the governesses. And the forms on which the children sat were slightly raised one above the other in a kind of amphitheatre.

"This is the third class, and you belong to it," said Mademoiselle Espréménil, with a slight yawn, as though tired of officiating as mistress of the ceremonies to this very insignificant guest. "Mademoiselle Hudault, here is a little one to be put sur le banc des petites. Her name is—my faith! Madame forgot to tell me her name, but you will know it in good time."

This she said in French to the teacher. She continued in indifferent English to the child,

"What your name of baptism, eh?"

"Lily — Lily Floris, ma'am," answered the child, meekly.

"I ask you for your name of baptism, not your name of family," interposed Mademoiselle Espréménil, sharply. "There are half a dozen Lilies in the school," she added to her coadjutor, "and three in this class. That will never do. Never mind, Madame will find some other name to her. Elle n'est pas grand' chose—she is not of much account—I fancy;" and she nodded to Mademoiselle Hudault, and retired, leaving Lily trembling in the middle of the class.

Mademoiselle Hudault was not ill natured, but she was over-worked. Her eyes could not be everywhere, consequently the child who was nearest her, and on whom her eyes most frequently lighted, had, habitually, rather a bad time of it; she was the scapegoat, and suffered for the sins of the rest of the forty. The forty were certainly enough to try the patience of Mademoiselle, or of any other mortal woman. Some of them were always going to sleep, and had to be shouted up into wakefulness. Others, who were day children, would creep on all fours to the corner where the baskets containing their dinners were deposited, abstract hunks of bread, bunches of grapes, or morsels of cold charcuterie—generally strong in the porcine element—and essay to munch surreptitiously behind their books or slates. Then detection followed, and there was a disturbance, and the contraband provisions were seized, and Mademoiselle Hudault would threaten to confiscate "la totalité," or to put the whole of the class "en pénitence." Add to this the fact that the majority of the pupils who had lessons to get by heart were in the habit of repeating their tasks to themselves in a monotonous drone—that when a band of small disciples was called up for "repetition," there was sure to be a book lost, or a page in an essential part torn out—that Julie was always making complaints against Amanda for pinching her, and that the bitter lamentations of Eulalie in consequence of Hortense having crammed her left ear full of slate pencil, were well-nigh incessant—that the atmosphere of the class-room was close almost to stifling point, and the odour exceedingly unpleasant—and that Mademoiselle Hudault's sole assistant in teaching and managing the forty girls was a depressed young person of sixteen, who was a little deaf, and somewhat lame, and was understood to be maintained out of charity by Mademoiselle Marcassin, and it may be judged how far the mistress of the class was over-worked, and that her nightly couch was not a bed of roses.

Mademoiselle Hudault, who spoke no English, made signs to Lily to sit at the extremity of the form nearest her, and there the child crouched in half-listless, half-alarmed quiescence. The strange noise confused her, the heavy drowsy smell sickened her. She was very tired and shaken by her journey; she had eaten nothing since the morning; the class-room began to swim round; then all faded into a murky haze, and she fell into a trance that was half sleeping and half swooning.

She revived to find herself in a little pallet-bed, in a long low hospital-like room with white-washed walls. On either side, as far as the eye could reach, were more pallets, and over against her, stretched in interminable perspective, a corresponding line of white ghastly-looking couches.

There was somebody at her pillow. It was the merry young lady with the wavy black hair, who had pulled her dress and made a face at her, and who had been apostrophised as Mademoiselle Marygold. No sooner did Lily open her eyes than this young lady proceeded to kiss her on both cheeks with great heartiness, bidding her (to Lily's delight), in English, lie still for a dear, and she would soon be well.

"You're English and I'm English," quoth the merry young lady, who spoke with extreme rapidity, as if to make up for lost time, and compensate for the many hours during which she was compelled to hold her tongue. "And Madame (that's Mademoiselle Marcassin), but we call her Madame, although she's never been married, to distinguish her from the rest of the governesses, who are all old frumps, and Mademoiselles of course. We're both English, and as you can't speak a word of French yet, Madame says I'm to take care of you, and tell you things, and sit by your side in the third class till you're able to get on by yourself. And oh! what fun to be in the third class, and I'm going on for fifteen, and I shall escape that horrible first class, with Mademoiselle Glaçon—icicle's her name, and icicle's her nature—and Ma'mselle Espréménil—we call her the hippopotamus—bothering us all day long, to say nothing of Madame; and when she comes in there's always a blow up. And now tell me all about yourself, my little darling. I'm seven years older than you; but we're the only two English girls in this jail of a place—and it *is* a jail, and worse than a jail—and we must be great cronies."

Here Miss Marygold paused: less, it is to be apprehended, for want of matter than for want of breath. Lily's answer had to be given very slowly and very feebly, and its tenor was mainly confined to an inquiry as to how she came there, in broad daylight, and in that bed?

"You weren't very well, and dozed off like; and you couldn't understand when Ma'mselle Hudault told you to wake up, and that she'd box your ears if you didn't; Madame don't allow it, but Ma'mselle can't help her temper sometimes; she's not such a cross old thing as the others, but she's always in a hurry, and that makes her hasty, and then one of the girls reminded Ma'mselle that you couldn't speak French, and another said you were ill, and then they threw some wine-and-water (out of one of the day-girls' bottles) over your face, and you didn't wake up, and so, as you couldn't walk, you were carried up to this bedroom, which is Dormitory Number Three, and the doctor came and said

you would do very nicely after you had had some sleep and some soup, and I'm to sleep next to you; and, upon my word, here comes Annette with the soup, and it's as nasty as ever, I do declare!"

The plateful of soup which a bony female servant, with a tall white cap, and a yellow silk handkerchief crossed over her breast, brought to the bedside, was certainly not nice. It was very hot, and thick, but it had a sour smell.

"Beans, cabbages, and tallow," remarked Miss Marygold, in contemptuous disparagement of the potage. "That's what we're fed upon at the Pension Marcassin, with cold boiled horse and vinegar-and-water to make up. You'd better eat it. Not eating your soup is called rebellion here. Madame says that Atheists and Voltaireans alone refuse to eat their soup. What, can't you eat it? Well, it must be swallowed, somehow, and to keep things quiet and comfortable, I'll eat it myself."

The which she presently proceeded to do, swallowing the nauseous compound in great gulps: not assuredly through greediness, for she made many wry faces as she ate, but apparently fearful lest some emissary of authority should discover her in the act. Annette, the gaunt servant, looked on in silence, and seemingly not in disapproval. She was not the cook, and she knew how very nasty the soup was. Nay, when Miss Marygold had carefully scraped up the last spoonful, and returned the plate to her, Annette produced from the pocket of her capacious apron two slices of bread, pressed close together upon an intermediate layer of plum jam. This dulcet sandwich, she expressed by signs, was to be eaten by Lily, and, indeed, the child needed but little persuasion, for, though her gorge rose at the soup, she was half famished with hunger.

"Annette's a good sort," went on Miss Marygold, when the gaunt servant, with a grin of satisfaction at Lily's returning appetite, had departed, "and never tells tales. We should be half starved if it wasn't for the bread-and-jam, for not half of us can eat the nasty messes they serve up in the refectory. I think the girls who have got money pay her to bring 'em nice things, and then she's a kind-hearted soul, and gives away out of her profits to the poor ones and the little ones."

Lily said that it was very kind of Annette, and emboldened by the kind merry face of her companion, ventured to ask if it would soon be tea-time?

"Tea-time!" echoed Miss Marygold. "Bless you, my pet. You'll never see any tea here. Why, only princesses and duchesses drink tea in Paris. Ma'mselle Marcassin has tea once a month, when the Abbé Prudhomme comes to catechise the girls, and prepare them for their first communion. Are you a Catholic, dear? I'm not, and Ma'mselle Espréménil says I'm a heretic, and Ma'mselle Glaçon says that out of the pale of the Church there is no salvation, and the girls tease my life out, because I don't cross myself, and don't believe in purgatory; and when madame has tea, Annette says she makes it with boiling orange-flower water, and puts rum into it, and honey, and barley-sugar, and chocolate drops, and all kinds of nasty things. Tea! You'd better forget all about tea. We have hot milk and bread in the morning at eight, and vegetables, cheese, and wine (that's the vinegar-and-water I mean), at twelve; that's called breakfast number two; and at five o'clock—it's just half-past now, and the clock was striking when Annette brought you the soup—we have that horrible stuff you couldn't eat, or another soup that's worse, and some meat that's either half raw or half burnt, and potatoes messed up in all kinds of funny ways, and some salad that's never fresh, and that's all till the next morning. Tea! Not if Madame knows it."

Miss Marygold paused again for respiration. Her lungs replenished with a fresh supply of oxygen, she informed Lily (who lay very quietly in her bed, soothed though fatigued, and with a smiling face upturned towards her companion) that her name was Mary Marygold, for shortness called Polly; but that the diminutive in question was only made use of in England, and that here Mary Marygold being considered tautological, and there being many Marie-Jeannes, Marie-Claudes, Marie-Françoises, and Marie-Louises in the school, she was customarily addressed as Mary-Gold, as though the one-half were her christian name, and the other her patronymic.

"And a poor neglected Marygold I am," she continued, shaking her wavy hair. "My father was a rich man. He had a beautiful large bookseller's shop at Exeter, down in Devonshire, you know; but he failed in business. He was what you call bankrupt, though he paid fourteen-and-sixpence in the pound. And then we came over here: I and pa, and my little brother Joey. And Joey died in the cholera year, ever so long ago. And he's buried in the Fosse Commune, the poor people's grave at the Montmartre Cemetery.

"All pa's money was gone," she went on, wiping her eyes. "He got work as a printer in the office where they print the English newspaper—Galignani's Messenger they call it. But he couldn't keep it, through his eyesight being so bad. And now he's a kind of parish clerk to an English chapel in the Champs Elysées, where you and I will go on Sundays, my darling; and he picks up a little by interpreting, and showing the museums and places to English travellers stopping at the hotels. Poor dear pa, he has a hard job to get along! He placed me here at school as an articled pupil at three hundred francs a year, and it's as much as ever he can do to pay it; but I learn as much as ever I can, and I've been here two years and a half, and when my time's out, which will be in another eighteen months, I shall get a situation as a governess and help pa, and we shall be very happy and comfortable. Dear old pa! I don't tell him how badly I'm treated here, for it would make him fret, and he'd quarrel with Madame,

or take me away, and I don't know half enough yet, even to be a nursery governess, and it would be a dreadful thing."

Again she took breath.

"You see," she resumed, "I try to learn as much as ever I can, and they do certainly teach you a lot of things here, and Madame is awfully clever. They say that she was a nun, years ago, and broke her vows at the Revolution. But I am always getting into scrapes. I can't help it. I'm merry, and it won't do to be merry here. If you want to get on, you must be grievous. I can't be grievous, and I'm continually in trouble. If it wasn't that I was wanted just now to take care of you, I ought to be in solitary confinement on bread-and-water for two days, for having got a hundred bad marks in the course of two years. Those I got for pulling your dress just made up my hundred. I'm always in arrear with half a dozen tasks, always in disgrace. I'm too big to be put en pénitence with the fool's cap on; but I'm had up almost every day to Madame's cabinet to be scolded out of my wits. I tell you, my dear, Madame's tongue hurts much worse than a ruler over your knuckles. Oh! I'm a most unhappy Marygold!",

And so she went rambling on, only too delighted to find a listener who could understand the gist of her complaints.

"And you, dear," she suddenly said, "who sent you here? Your papa?"

"I don't know anything about my papa," returned poor Lily. "They could never tell me anything about him at Mrs. Bunnycastle's. I think he must be dead, and in Heaven. I am Quite Alone."

So she was, God help her.

"And your mamma? You must have a mamma, you know, or, perhaps you are an orphan. There are four girls here who are orphans."

"I'm sure I don't know," little Lily responded, shaking her head dubiously. "The lady who brought me here said she was my mamma, but she was unkind to me, and frightened me. You oughtn't to be frightened of your mamma."

"Oh, I don't know that," interrupted the Marygold. "I used to be, dreadfully."

"Was she unkind, then?"

"No!" returned the girl, compressing her lips as though she had a great deal to say that was disagreeable, but was wishful to reveal only so much as was absolutely necessary. "She was worse than unkind. She drank, and was the ruin of poor pa. Don't talk any more about her. She's dead, and pa forgave her, as he, poor dear, hopes to be forgiven. Not that my pa's done anything to be forgiven for. He's the best of men. But we're all sinners, you know, dear. And now—oh good gracious me! you mustn't talk any more, for I've got two pages of the Morale en Action about that stupid old Monsieur de Montesquieu and the Marseilles boatman—it's a horrible book, and I don't believe a word of it—to learn by heart before bedtime. Taking care of you isn't to save me altogether, you see."

She turned to a much dog's-eared edition of the interesting work she had mentioned; but her assiduity in study very soon came to an end.

"No papa! No mamma that you're certain about!" she repeated, with a perplexed look. "Why, my poor dear little innocent darling you *must* be quite alone in the world."

"Indeed I am," said poor Lily. She did not sigh. Children seldom sigh. Suspiration is an accomplishment to be learnt, like curtseying But her voice trembled as she spoke.

"Never mind, dear," the Marygold continued, pressing the child's hand. "We must make the best of it. You must belong to somebody, to have been sent here at all. Do you know whether you are to be brought up as a governess?"

No; Lily had not the slightest idea on that topic. As yet, she had not fathomed the possibility of anybody being "brought up" to the profession of tuition. She had a dim notion that governesses grew, or came at once to maturity, with black silk dresses and sour looks.

"It seems to me," remarked the Marygold, "that there are a great deal too many governesses in the world. I forget how many hundreds of millions of people the geography says there are on the earth; but, as far as I have seen, all the old girls seem to be governesses, and all the young girls are being brought up to be governesses. Madame turns 'em out here by the dozen, like cakes. Where the children are to come from that we are all to teach, I'm sure *I* don't know."

Not much progress was made in the study of M. de Montesquieu's transactions with the Marseilles boatman. The girl went prattling on to the child, and telling her she must call her Polly, and that she, Polly, would call her Lily, and that they would be as happy as the arrangements of the establishment and the severity of Madame would permit. And then it grew dusk, and at about nine o'clock, when forty girls came trooping silently to bed in Dormitory Number Three, Lily fell off into sound and refreshing slumber.

OUR BREEDS AND RACES.

For years, we might almost say for centuries, the world has come to England for horses, just as it goes to France for fashions, to China for teas, or to Spain for sherries. The connexion, indeed, has been gradually increasing upon us, until we are fain to confess that we can hold it no longer. The country is on the verge of a national bankruptcy in the item of horse-flesh. Either we have oversold ourselves, or, flushed with success, have become culpably careless of the proper conduct of the business. We have so neglected this that we have not even sufficient stock for our own wants, much less to meet the requirements of other nations, which will probably soon set up in opposition against us; very manifest, as it is, that some of them are cultivating the pursuit with earnestness and attention. Still, it cannot be said that

our own government is altogether indifferent to the importance of the matter, as a certain encouragement has long been given to the breeding of good horses.

It may be as well to state here that it is for nags, hunters, hacks, and so forth, that England has been more especially celebrated all the world over, whilst the material of these is assumed to be supplied to us direct from the turf. Racing is a national sport, officially recognised as such by the Crown, which bestows an annual grant of upwards of five thousand pounds towards the maintenance of the pastime, though it may be as well to ascertain how far the royal countenance is yet warranted. We must, in the first instance, take it as admitted that the excellence of the horse has been developed by such means; and then, curiously enough, we must proceed to trace his deterioration to the same cause. If, with more horses than ever; if, with the production of the thorough-bred, as our fountain-head, multiplied over and over again, and springing up and cropping out in every direction; if, with more stock we have a less available supply; there must be clearly something wrong in our management of the material. And, no doubt, there *is* something amiss. So far as any useful purpose is concerned there is no question but that the modern system of racing tends to a deal more harm than good. How can we reasonably expect to find a fair share of stout weight-carrying hunters, when the practice of the turf, whence we are to obtain our hunter-blood, is going in the opposite direction? The modern race-horse is required to be neither stout nor strong. He is no longer valued for any such properties. If he can carry six or seven stones for half or three-quarters of a mile, he is worth hundreds or thousands more than if his great merit were the ability to run four miles—as his forefathers did—with twelve stones on his back.

At the present moment there are not more than three or four such races run from one year's end to the other, while there are not more than three or four horses found ever capable of going such a distance. In fact, lasting powerful well-developed animals are no longer needed on the turf, as there is not that money to be made out of them which may be realised by a smart two-year-old, or a speedy weed that can just live over the two-year-old course. And here, on this ground—the two-year-old course—we meet with the root of the evil. In proclaiming it we are making no new discovery nor startling announcement, but simply referring to a fact as well known to the Senior Steward of the Jockey Club as it is to her Majesty's Master of the Horse. It is this pernicious practice which is surely and certainly undermining the breed of our English horses. From the outset we act in defiance of nature, as from his birth the race-horse has but an artificial existence. The law itself has been altered to suit this monstrous system, and the colt accordingly dates his age in modern times from the first of January, instead of from the first of May. There is every incentive to have the foal born as early as possible, and he comes accordingly on some raw nipping January morn, or just when winter fairly sets in with February, to be coddled and coaxed from the hour of his birth like house-lamb, and to be sacrificed, most probably, at an early period. Thus the young one is forced, and pampered, and prematurely developed, either for sale as a yearling, or to race as early as possible in his second season. It would be unfair, though, to shut our eyes to the fact that thorough-bred yearlings have never realised such high prices as of late. So grand and well-looking have they been brought out, that the foreigners have had little chance against our own home buyers, and fortunately nearly all the best have been kept in this country. One of these magnificent, finely-grown yearlings, to whose extraordinary merits the most superlative expletives could scarcely do justice, Lord of the Hills, made eighteen hundred guineas—and never afterwards was worth as many shillings. Another, the Nugget, knocked down for fifteen hundred guineas, developed into an overgrown monster that could never be trained, and was eventually sold for a few pounds to a veterinary surgeon, who must have been puzzled what to do with his purchase. Umballah, bought as a yearling for eleven hundred guineas, was disposed of again at three years old for thirty-five guineas, without ever having appeared as a race-horse; Voivode, at a thousand and twenty guineas, ran once; and Œnopides, who could never be brought out, cost one thousand guineas at one year old, and realised twenty-five guineas at three years old. Canto, at one thousand guineas, was not good enough to win even a handicap; The Avenger, at another one thousand guineas, ran but twice, and was cast out as a cripple at three years old; Greenfinch, at an investment of nine hundred and ten guineas, was a wretched plater that ran behind in selling stakes; and Automaton, whose original value was nine hundred guineas, died early in his third year. It is scarcely necessary to descend any lower on this list of bargains; but we may stop with Cellarius, an eight hundred and fifty guineas yearling, that finished his brilliant career during last season, when he won the immense amount of thirty-two sovereigns at Pontefract, and thirty sovereigns subsequently at Northallerton—a fine return on the original outlay?

These are, we believe, the highest priced yearling colts ever sold by public auction, and the majority of them amongst the worst animals, even in this degenerate age, ever handled. There are others, of course, yet to be tested; among them, Archimedes, a yearling, knocked down at the notorious sale of Lord Stamford's stud, for no less than three thousand guineas; but it must be borne in mind that this took place in December, when the yearling had, of course, been in work and possibly tried; for at her Majesty's sale in the spring he only fetched seven hundred and twenty guineas. What does all this prove? That young animals artificially

forced, and unnaturally developed, must decline as prematurely as they blossomed. Still, the majority do make some return for the system, or it could not continue. That really handsome well-furnished chesnut which has just cantered up, arching his neck and bending so beautifully to the fine *hand* of his rider, is only a two-year-old, in the finest possible condition. In two or three years' time, this promising colt will probably be a worn-out, broken-down, roaring, hobbling cripple, fit for nothing but the stud —and how far fit for *that* the present state of our breeds of horses may disclose. Youatt, in his admirable essay on Humanity to Brutes, written more than twenty years, argues that "it must be wrong to call upon the powers of any animal before the period at which nature intended that they should be fully, or nearly so, developed. That animal can never attain the state of perfection for which he was designed. Should he exhibit extraordinary strength and speed, he obtains a reputation in the sporting world which he is generally unable to sustain; for the severe measures that have been resorted to, in order to bring him up to the race, are contrary to the laws of nature. The development of the horse has been forced beyond his age. The bones never obtain their proper strength; the muscles never gain their full power; and at a future period, when greater speed and strength are expected from him if he continues on the turf, he probably deceives his backers, and is disgraced; or, at least, ere he has seen four or five years, he is evidently getting old, and is withdrawn from the turf." And then our essayist points his sketch with this sentence: "The capabilities and powers of a useful and noble animal are prematurely exhausted, and many years of valuable and pleasing existence are lost to him." The following figures, taken from the most authentic sources, will show how this evil has increased. In 1859 there were fourteen hundred and sixty-seven thorough-bred foals dropped, and of these six hundred and sixty-one ran at two years old, two hundred and ninety-two of them never afterwards appearing on the turf. Of the whole crop of foals, however, one hundred and sixty did not come out until they were three years old: while of the two-year-old performers three hundred and sixty-eight also continued to race in their third year, thus giving a total of five hundred and twenty-eight three-year-old runners. Arrived at four years old, there were but two hundred and ninety-one out of the fourteen hundred and sixty-seven foals, or of the eight hundred and twenty-one two and three-year-old runners, still fit to race! The abuse of the system may be further demonstrated by the two subjoined comparative tables:

	Two yrs. ran	Three yrs. ran	Four yrs. ran	Five yrs. & upwards. ran	ran in all
1802...	31	117	108	280	536
1860...	608	521	302	286	1717

It will be gathered from these figures that sixty years ago a horse was in his prime at six years old: whereas he would now never seem to be so good as at two years old, after which age he gradually declines. In 1800 the turfite depended mainly for his sport on horses whose powers were nearly if not fully developed; whereas in 1860 his chief reliance was on two-year-olds.

The very best of our race-horses do not often survive the severity of early preparation, beyond their third year. Let us look to the Derby during the last ten years; all of the famous winners, Andover, Wild Dayrell, Ellington, Beadsman, Musjid, Kettledrum, and Caractacus, never appeared as four-year-olds, but were hopelessly gone at that age; while the renowned Blink Bonny, that did manage to make one effort as a four-year-old, was disgracefully beaten; and Macaroni, the winner in 1863, is already so infirm that he will probably never run again. The one grand exception is Thormanby, the wonder of his day, who ran repeatedly at two years old, won the Derby at three years old, and the Ascot Cup at four years old. Even premature forcing and drilling could not ruin his fine constitution, nor batter to pieces his low lengthy frame.

A really good horse is of very little value for racing purposes after he has turned three years old. His "form," as the phrase goes, is known, and there is not much further for him to do, beyond occasionally winning a royal plate or a weight for age cup, when his owner would have to lay the odds, so that very little money could be made at such a business. Money in these days is the key-stone of the turf, which must be regarded no longer as an amusement, but as a profession. Even noblemen will refuse to start their horses if they cannot get their money "on;" and the straightforward honourable old-fashioned sportsman, who always ran to win, would now be looked upon as little less than a lunatic. How could he ever expect to get well in a handicap, if he persevered in such a course? And the handicap is another great means of deteriorating the breed of horses. Perhaps there never was any better plan devised for systematically encouraging fraudulent and deceitful practices as the great handicap race, which now vies with the two-year-old stake as the chief feature of a popular race meeting. If a man have a really good animal that he wishes to place favourably in a handicap, his grand object is to make the world believe he has a bad one. Horses are frequently run for months together with such an object in view. They are sent to run, out of condition, or pulled back by their jockeys, or lose the start, or "run out" at the turns, or some other equally efficient steps are taken by which they may run to lose and not to win. At length the time comes; the real merits of the horse have been kept in the dark; he is estimated accordingly, and put down to carry an extremely light weight; and he comes out in his true colours.

These proceedings are of daily and hourly occurrence, and yet it was but a week or two since that the stewards of the Jockey Club indignantly warned an owner off the race-course

who had directed his jockey not to win. The crime was not so much one of commission, as of discovery; or what would the stewards say to the decision of some of their own Newmarket handicaps? There is a race run annually at Ascot Heath, known as the Royal Hunt Cup, but which, so far as it has anything to do with the Royal Hunt or hunters, might as appropriately be called the Royal Yacht Cup. It is a handicap run over just one mile, and nine times out of ten, it is carried off by some miserable weed with five or six stone on his back. The horse that won it last year was a four-year-old, which carried the crushing weight of five stone twelve pounds, and never won a race previously, and has now, after this tremendous performance, been taken out of work! The Royal Hunt! Was there ever such a burlesque of a title? Mark that narrow stilty leggy animal, boring away at the unfortunate lad on his back, who has actually taken off his shirt in order to ride the weight, and may very possibly have to hang for an hour or so about the post on a raw March morning, with no better protection against the elements than a red silk jacket and a pair of the thinnest possible "continuations." Scarcely any sum would buy the ugly creature now; though he may be of no earthly service save carrying a wasted boy over half a mile of ground, and win a handicap. But then there will be some thousands pocketed if he win, and though starters may threaten and stewards may storm, he must never "go" until he is well in front, though they fine him five pounds every five minutes. At Northampton the other day, with snow still on the house-tops, an hour was consumed in starting the field for the Spencer Plate: a race of five furlongs, to which we only regret that a master of hounds, and altogether so good a sportsman as Lord Spencer, should ever give his name or his countenance.

In Ireland, where they have become seriously alarmed on the subject of horse-breeding, the Royal Agricultural Society has been taking evidence. A Mr. Farrell, says in his: "We have at present a few good two-year-olds; but we have no three-year-olds, no four-year-olds, and no five-year-olds worth anything — you could not find one. The horses bred here now would have been turned loose on the Curragh in olden time as useless. They would lie down under the weights carried long ago before they reached the end of the course. No horse bred now would have a chance for a Queen's plate with even some half-bred horses which we had thirty years ago, such as Hesperus and Barebones. I think our horses are getting worse and worse every year. I don't know a single horse of this year that could have run for the distances and with the weights of former plates—not one. At the end of the race it was a pity to see Tourist or Oldminster coming in. They had *no speed*, and appeared quite unable to carry their weights. I would not like to breed from any horse which ran for a Queen's plate this year. The poor spindle-shanked horses we have now can carry no weight, or run any distance. They cannot keep their pace for more than a few hundred yards. If we continue to breed from these we will soon have no good horses at all in this country. They are getting more weedy every year. You could not expect a good hack-car horse from them. Our right class of horses began to decline when handicapping commenced with three-year-old and two-year-old horses. Handicapping is a very bad principle in racing, and a great cause of such a bad class of horses being now bred. Runs for two years' stakes injure us very much. No horse should be allowed to run for a Queen's plate *that has run as a two-years-old.*"

This is coming to the point; but it may be asked, who is this Mr. Farrell, and what does he know about the matter? Mr. Farrell, then, although for many years a resident in Ireland, was born in England, and brought up at Newmarket in the stables of one Mr. Robson, the great trainer of his day. Mr. Farrell left for Ireland in 1814, where he himself has trained for the Marquis of Sligo, and other leading sportsmen, on the famous Curragh of Kildare. He speaks, with full acquaintance of both the past and the present: of what horses *were* in England and Ireland, and what they now *are*. We have no hesitation in saying that his is the most direct and valuable of all the opinions given; and we are glad to see that the committee, in their report, call the attention of the government to it, as the advice of "the oldest and most experienced trainer at the Curragh, and whose evidence must be considered as a faithful and important record of fifty years' intimate practical knowledge of the English and Irish turf."

Will the government turn their attention to this subject? Will they come to understand that the countenance they give to racing, as at present conducted, is simply encouraging a national evil? The five or six thousand pounds spent yearly, in providing royal plates to be run for, is money worse than thrown away. One mare took seventeen of these prizes during last season; frequently without any competitor appearing against her. Either these plates should be withdrawn, or they should be re-issued under carefully revised conditions. As Mr. Farrell says, no horse that has ever run at two years old should be allowed to run for a royal plate; and no plate should be presented to any meeting, where *any* races were under a mile, or where any horse of any age ever carried less weight than eight stone seven pounds. Of course, this would interfere materially with the betting and the handicaps, but the sooner they are interfered with the better: not merely for the breed of horses, but for the turf itself. Then, again, why should not the former weights for these royal plates be reverted to? Why should not a horse be as well able to carry twelve stone in 1864 as he was in 1800? At Salisbury, last year, the conditions were, three years old to carry seven stone eight pounds; four years old, nine stone seven pounds; five years old, ten

stone two pounds; six and "aged," ten stone four pounds; and, at Salisbury, in 1800, four years old carried ten stone four pounds; five years old, eleven stone six pounds; six years old and aged, twelve stone. The lightest weight of sixty years since was more than the heaviest of the present time. In those days, moreover, they ran four-mile heats; and now the course is a single run generally of about two miles, and rarely more than three. The longest distance now ever set at Epsom is two miles and a quarter, and the Metropolitan Stakes over this course is falling rapidly in popularity. Indeed, our decadence during the last ten years is very noticeable.

At that same Salisbury meeting in 1800, as an eye-witness assures us, any of the four horses that ran for his Majesty's plate was quite equal to carrying fourteen or fifteen stone to hounds; and one of them, Black Sultan, who ran second, was afterwards renowned as the sire of capital stout strong hunters. We are no advocates for heats, but let no Queen's plate be run at less than three miles. There is not a prettier race run at Newmarket than that over the Beacon of four miles and a furlong, and it is quite a treat to watch the horses striding away in the distance, and gradually mounting the hill home. But how seldom do we now see this course on the list? and, when during last spring we did witness a match over it, the couple finished in terrible distress. Mr. Farrell would say, "It was a pity to see them coming in." The portrait of Eclipse was taken as he went, well within himself, sweeping over the Beacon; but Eclipse never ran until he was five years old; he was a well-furnished muscular horse who could go a distance carrying a weight, and who left behind him some hundreds of sons and daughters to perpetuate his fame, and he lived and flourished to the twenty-fifth year of his age. Had he "flourished" at this era he would have been broken down before he had seen his fourth summer; or they would have condemned him as a great lumbering beast, before he had time to develop his extraordinary powers. How many a good horse is sacrificed to two-year-old stakes and short courses! Here, we repeat, is the root of the evil. It is idle to talk of farmers and others not breeding the proper stamp of horse, when we deny them the means of doing so.

The one great want of the country at this time, as it has been for some time past, is the sound and stout short-legged thorough-bred horse. Very few such horses are now to be found, simply because the present system of racing tends directly against soundness and stoutness. Or, if there be a horse of this character about, he is almost certain to be bought up for foreigners, who think little of flying performances when they can get whole colours, big bone, clean legs, and good wind. The best race of last season was that for the Ascot Cup, when Buckstone beat Tim Whiffler after they had run a dead heat. The former is a great growing horse, full of fine points, that will still develop with time, while his opponent is a narrow light upright animal, with scarcely a good trait about him beyond his neat head and fine temper. Still, at eight stone seven pounds, he was almost equal to Buckstone: whereas, had they carried ten stone seven pounds or eleven stone, the weed could have had no chance whatever. But, mark the moral of all this:—Buckstone, a big sound powerful horse, has already been shipped off: while Tim Whiffler, so infirm that he never ran during the whole year but for that Ascot Cup, still remains at Newmarket, and is likely to remain there.

GODPAPA VANCE.

I WONDER if it would be possible now-a-days to find as lovable a little fishing town on the coast of England as South Cove was when first I knew it, or indeed knew anything; for the tall flagstaff which tops one of the pair of rocky hills that guard its deeply-curved harbours is the earliest landmark in the memories of my babyhood.

I suppose I must have watched that flagstaff and the vane atop of it from my cradle, or my nurse's knee, for the house in which I was born was nested against the opposite hill-side, and whenever (as has often been the case of late years) I dream of the tall flagstaff standing out sharp and clear from the pleasant sky of those old days, it, and the hill that it crowns, seem to rise out of the boughs of the pink-flowered almond-tree which I know grew close beneath my nursery window.

We were children together, South Cove and I, more than half a century ago. I may say that I grew with its growth, and was the loving playmate of the pretty little place, now puffed up into a "fashionable sea-side resort," in its simple pinafore days. The place has had small charm for me ever since it took a fancy for sticking glaring new crescents on its beautiful wooded brows, and girding in its swelling shores with abominable dusty esplanades; getting blowzed and overblown, in short, and hankering after fine fashions and high airs, which, together with its high rents, effectually keep humble friends like me at a distance.

I have heard it said, that we never prize our most beloved ones for what they are, but for what our own heart-limning makes them. And in a measure, I suppose, so it is still, that I continue to love South Cove so dearly, touching up and varnishing over in imagination all its real remembered beauties with the jealous care of an exclusive passion; then pleasing myself by worshipping my own handiwork, and finding a sharper outline of existent reality in those airy pictures than in the present features of any other abode I may ever have on earth.

And yet I protest that the wonderful charm I find in the ideal image of my dear old sea-side home, is not in any great measure of my own creation. The place is in renown for its beauty still, and abounding indeed must have been the loveliness which could have survived the taming

and trimming of fifty years, induced by the requirements of several generations of sea-side idlers, and all the whimsies that wealth can bring about it.

So, as I said, I know the Cove better than any other spot on earth, having struck root there and twisted all the young elastic fibres of my childish fancy round about its image; and as often as I fall in with any one who knows my old love only in her full-dressed matronhood, I cannot help, if he will bear with my prosing, trying to show her to him as I see her myself, with all her wavy hills fresh as thymy green turf and weather-stained grey limestone can make them, to say nothing of her men and women, whose presence starts up, whether I please or no, in odd corners of the picture, and smile pleasant recognition on me with eyes that have, for the most part, seen their last of daylight many a year ago.

There is no need of spell or vigil to evoke such memories. Let me but wrap myself round, as it were, close and soft, in the pearl-grey mists of my native hill-sides, so as to shut out the searching sunshine and the hard worldly sights and sounds of a later time—and this grows easier and easier to do as every year rolls by—and I am sure to dream them back again from the dead, those dear old homely figures, and clasp hands with them once more in their likeness as they lived.

First in my memories as in my affections come worthy Captain Roger Vance, and Bella his wife—so stand their names on the grey slab close to the pathway, under the ancient elm-trees of South Cove churchyard. Godpapa Vance and Aunt Bella they always were for me, though the only tie between us was that of baptismal responsibility. I call him Captain Vance because my little world of South Cove always styled him so, though I believe he had barely reached the grade of lieutenant when he left the navy ever so many years before I knew him. My father and he had been friends and middies together on board his Majesty's frigate Dreadnought in the blustering days of hard fighting and hard swearing, press-gangs, long queues, and general clashing Dutch concert of threatened invasion and Rule Britannia. I have heard my father say that Godpapa Vance never cared greatly for his profession, and was not sorry to be called home on his father's sudden death to be a comfort and companion to his widowed mother, whose only surviving child he was, and who systematically worshipped and cosseted him, till I think she must have laid the foundation for a certain leaning towards valetudinarian self-indulgence, and impatience of trifling troubles, which made part of his nature when I first took childish note of it. There stands Godpapa Vance before me now unchanged—and in all the years I knew him he never did seem to change—a little quiet-voiced man, upwards of threescore, and looking older than he was, with a small close-shaven pinkish face lighted by pale blue eyes, and dotted with small features of no particular cut or expression. His head was small even for his small figure, high-peaked in the crown, and of such perfect polished baldness that I remember how I used profanely to long to try with my baby fingers whether it had the coldness and hardness as it had the glossiness of a china cup. What might have been the colour of his hair I could not even guess, for only a little thin fringe just above his shirt collar was left, and that was purely white in my time, whiter even than the grand powdered toupet with which he was adorned in the gold-mounted miniature Aunt Bella had of him in his uniform, and which had belonged to the Dowager Mrs. Vance, long since laid at rest.

Godpapa Vance especially affected capacious garments. His black coats, trousers, and gaiters, and stone-coloured kerseymere waistcoats, all of superfine materials and scrupulously brushed, were invariably of loose and baggy construction, and made his corporeal bulk seem less than it really was. A loose soft white handkerchief encircled his throat and rested on the broad snow-white frill of his shirt-front. He walked with a slight limp, and a painful-seeming half circular motion of the left foot at every step he took, which obliged him to lean when out of doors on a stout bamboo cane topped with ivory. He himself never spoke to us children about his lameness, but we knew for all that how he had injured his foot many years before in leaping down from a haystack on the projecting iron prongs of a pitchfork, but I must say that to me at least the possibility of such a reckless feat seemed to involve matter so derogatory to godpapa's dignity, that I had no small misgivings as to the truth of the legend, and considered his lameness as all the more mysterious.

After Captain Roger quitted the navy, and left my father blazing away at the Mounseers on board the Dreadnought, he and his lady mother lived together for several years, I fancy, in London, where she had a grim genteel mansion in some long obsolete region of propriety. Being sufficiently well born, well bred, and well off in the world, he managed to see something of society in those years beyond what encircled his doting mother's tea-table, with its knot of demure old cronies, as unchangeable as were its choice blue Nankin tea-service, the gunpowder tea, crushed sugar-candy, and subsequent pool at loo.

I know he was said to have mingled—even to very perilous extent, so thought that thrice-respectable junta—in a wild whirl of fashionable revel, and to have played his part, a quiet "walking gentleman's" part it must have been, methinks, in many a gay slipshod reckless masquerade of the wits and beauties of the metropolis. The emigration was just then pouring a very stampedo of questionable fooleries and fripperies, not to say worse, into England, and the said wits and beauties were busy draping themselves in the tinselled second-hand sentimentalisms just put off perforce on many a reeking scaffold by their ill-fated brethren and sisters of France. Still I do not think that Godpapa Vance was much the worse on the whole

for either their teaching or example. His modish freaks were soon over, and left little impress behind them, except a kind of retrospective wonderment and comical self-glorification for his escape from the quicksands of the great world.

Thenceforth he gave himself up to small nibblings at art and science, which, if they placed him on no very lofty peak of knowledge, at least gave him plenty of busy trifling to fill up his time withal, and sent him trotting round to scientific meetings, till he appeared a very pundit of unfathomable lore to the simple-minded junta in mob-caps and calashes, that gathered weekly round his adoring mother's arm-chair.

All these particulars of Godpapa Vance's younger life I only knew, of course, years after the date of my first memories of him, when my childish awe for his small quiet presence, his uncertain step, and even the faint mingled perfume of Russia leather and scented snuff which clung about his clothes—though I never saw him carry or use a snuff-box—had long worn away. But even in those first, almost baby days, his easy politeness, his fluent and excellent French, his shrewd eye (even without spectacles) for a pretty or distinguished face, his hard little chart-like pencil drawings, his splendid Amati violoncello, and learned array of telescopes, microscopes, compasses, and chronometers, all in brass-bound mahogany cases, seemed to impress me with a sort of hazy consciousness of his antecedents and his character, which I vividly remember.

Captain Vance had passed his fortieth year when he chose him a helpmeet; and when he did so, and brought her home to take her place in the grim genteel mansion, and her seat beside the Nankin tea-service, and her share of the pool at loo, the Dowager Mrs. Vance, now grown aged and somewhat fretful, and her sympathising mob-capped chorus, felt something very like resentment at the homely choice their Crichton had made. and expressed their disapproval in the rather harsh and judicial atmosphere with which they presently surrounded the bride. Not very bride-like, I fancy, was she in those days, dear, bright, cozy, girlish-hearted Aunt Bella. Her brightness and her girlishness were all in that large heart of hers; encased in a triple envelope of comfortable embonpoint, through which scarce a gleam could get out to idealise her stodgy little person. For the bride of old Mrs. Vance's paragon son of forty, was—fearful to record!—a year or two his senior; short, stout, and rather swarthy of complexion, with no taste in dress, no elegant accomplishments, no high blood, and hardly any money!

I wonder still, as I have often wondered in old days, whether Godpapa Vance when he married Aunt Bella—we called her aunt from sheer affection, and the clinging desire to make ourselves, as it were, akin with her—I wonder, I say, whether her husband had really any clear definite idea of his own transcendent wisdom in the selection. That he knew she worshipped him I have no doubt, for those clear little brown eyes of hers could never have kept in the secret; but did his precise ledger-like mind fully conceive with what an angel in the house he had provided himself for all his time to come; did he know how she would utterly efface and forget herself and her claims month after month, year after year, in rocking the poor invalid captious mother-in-law into semi-content with the tender cradle-song of her blessed good temper, and even be able to hush up and smooth away the sick woman's querulous whimperings and pettish accusations against himself, when the claims of his archæological, or astronomical, or entomological friends kept him, nothing loth, evening after evening away from her couch; when the gunpowder tea had grown tasteless to her, and the loo distracting, and the calashed junta a batch of chatterboxes, and nothing would do but the poor short swarthy round-about God-given daughter-in-law to sit and tend her en permanence, and wear out her own last years of middle life as a poorly paid sick-nurse for ever on duty? If Godpapa Vance foreboded one half of this his bride's priceless dowry of blessings, or as the light she was to shed on his own life even to its end, when he proposed marriage to plain Miss Bella Hammond, he must have had higher wisdom in him than all his 'ologies could teach.

In time—but it must have been a weary time even for Aunt Bella's patience—old Mrs. Vance left her couch for the family vault, and her son sold the grim genteel mansion, and went with Aunt Bella to lead a quite new life somewhere in one of the midland counties, in the near neighbourhood of a large cathedral town, where the advantages (to use the house-agent's phrase) of pure country air, pleasant society, and good medical attendance, were all combined. A good doctor had come to be by this time an important item in the list of Captain Vance's comforts; for he had already begun to cosset himself into the possession of sundry pet ailments, of which the tender cares wherewith his wife surrounded him were not likely to make him think the less. Probably there was little beyond mere fancy in the whole fabric of suspicious symptoms of strange disease which his nervous fears were for ever totting up into a deadly sum total. He used to keep a diary of them, interspersed with casual notices of fly-fishing, star-gazing, and quartette-playing; while the incidental doses wherewith he continually mortified his inner man were jotted down in red ink on the margin of the page; bolus, draught, or potion, beautifully inscribed in clear round text characters.

Could eyes profane have peeped into this diary, bound neatly and curiously in parchment by his own hands, they would have seen such passages as the following:

"Thursday, May 6th. Threatenings of head ache, and strange uneasiness about right kneepan, after copying four pages of Donovan's index. Can it be commencement of white swelling?

"Mem.: To look in Dr. Carver's book for premonitory symptoms. Set lower drawer of

my shells in order, and found that the labels of four specimens of Patella vulgata had come unglued.

"Mem.: To fasten them on more carefully.

"Quartette evening at Shawe's. Haydn's Q. in G. Bow-hand weak. Tried an adagio from Beethoven's Rasoumoffsky set. Head too confused to count time. All gave it up, and went back to Corelli.

"Mem.: To look up signs of predisposition to Hydatids in brain in Carver's book. Came home late. Rain. Fear I took cold. Bella still up, making white wine whey."

Here, in the margin, in red ink:

"Four grains rhubarb, two pills, lotion for knee. Very little good from either."

Turning over the leaf, the eyes profane aforesaid might trace on the chronicle as follows:

"Friday, 7th. Knee a little relieved, but same queer feeling about left elbow. Never heard of white swelling there.

"Mem.: Not to forget Carver. Never can be too sure. Broiled kidney for breakfast. Throat a little husky, as on Monday. Heard last night of old woman dying of quinsy somewhere near. Must be careful of cold. Additional flannel waistcoat.

"Put off going out with rod till next week. Received sixth volume of Sowerby. Strange that they should always come on a Friday.

"Transit of Jupiter. Cloudy. Could make out nothing. Think something is amiss with lens.

"Mem.: Write to Dollond's about it.

"Rain again. Chilly. Bella walked into town to see about my linsey-woolsey socks.

"Mem.: To ask Dr. Fayle if any cases of ague in neighbourhood. Tried to finish copying outlines of Pholas dactylus in pencil from Montagu's Testacea Brit., but hand shook sadly, and suffered from drowsiness. Forced to leave off. To bed early.

"Mem.: To look into Carver for lethargy."

And in the margin of the page again the red ink rubric:

"Nervous mixture twice. Port wine gargle. Additional blanket."

So passed away more years. Godpapa Vance spent them partly in small flirtations with the sciences, partly in those mild Corelli-loving quartette parties, or in unobtrusive quaverings at a select glee club in the town, and partly in fishing excursions along the surrounding trout-streams, in the service of which new hobby he laid in expensive fishing-tackle, enough to furnish the anglers of three counties with rod and line for a lifetime, and invariably returned from his piscatory pilgrimages with a cargo of new diseases, and a list of new symptoms and surmises wherewith to try the tenderness and temper of dear Aunt Bella.

A short time before I was born, when my father, having just gained his post-captaincy and lost an arm in action, retired from the navy on half-pay, and settled at South Cove, Captain Vance began to find out that his midland home was, after all, too damp for him, and so broke up his establishment, sold his library, and one-half of his mahogany cases, and set up his rest close beside his old messmate, in the house where I knew him, and which he and Aunt Bella inhabited thenceforward as long as they lived.

Number three, Meadow-row! There it stands again, that long-demolished palace of delights of my childhood—of delights not without their spice of awe and heart-quaking—for Godpapa Vance was a tremendous personage in my eyes, and his tiny study an arsenal of fearful wonders, whose learned perfume somehow seemed to ooze out through its listed door (always locked except when he was sitting within), and pervade the whole side of the house on which it opened. A little, pale, drab-coloured house it was, which, like its neighbours, was built against the slope of a hill. They had a road in front of them, and each had its little railed square garden, like an old-fashioned flowered handkerchief spread out on the further side of the road. Beyond and between the blossoming shrubs which hedged these gardens were seen fragments of roofs and chimney-pots, for the street (so called by courtesy) which led into the Cove was on a much lower level than Meadow-row, and kept its ugliness, as much as a street could do, perdu behind the lilacs and mezereons, while the beautiful blue sea flashed and trembled in the sunshine away to the left in an undulating emerald goblet of hills, with a few tall spiky masts rising up from their anchorage into the sky, and right in front, beyond the huddled buildings of the little town, stood out, rough with fir-trees and grey limestone blocks, the sturdy height we used to call Stony Point, on whose venerable flank some narrow flights of moss-grown and broken steps went meandering up to a beautiful wood path far above the sea, and were fully visible from Meadow-row.

Outside, it was a meek little Quakerish house, consisting of ground floor and first floor only, with four windows in front, each having an arched cornice above it like a surprised eyebrow, and an unsophisticated street door, framed in a little arched recess, which seemed a rudimentary porch, and up which a luxuriant white jessamine was carefully trained. There was a narrow lane, with a high garden wall, which separated the house on one side from its fellows, and ended in a steep, awkward, rugged flight of steps (South Cove was rife in such steps then), leading to the brow of the hill. A prim little kitchen door, and two more up-stairs windows, opened on this lane, and all round the basement story, raised a foot or two above the level of the road, was a narrow-railed flower-border, with tufted edgings of delicate white campanulas and London-pride, enclosing knots of white and tiger lilies, and bushes of the finest and most luscious cabbage-roses I ever saw or smelt.

Inside, a tiny hall led to the foot of a tiny staircase. On the left was the dining-room (eating-room Aunt Bella always called it),

where tall cupboard doors in the further wall, brass-latticed and lined with blue, shut in no end of marvellous dainties and curious confections in brown glazed pots and squab green bottles. On the right was a similar chamber, with a similar cupboard, sacred to godpapa's cast-off phials, gallipots, and pill-boxes. I suppose it was my knowledge of the mysteries of this repository, together with the fact that the blind of its one window was generally kept down, and the sash obstinately closed against the scent of the great good-humoured cabbage-roses, that made me rather shy of entering its precincts, especially towards dusk. But over and above these reasons for hesitation there hung above the chimney-piece a tall old grimy oil-painting of the famous race-horse Childers, held by an ill-favoured cadaverous jockey in a yellow jacket (the said jockey quite out of all drawing, and ridiculously diminutive compared to the steed), which excited in me something very like terror, and made me think of all sorts of ghostly chargers galloping through old ballads and legends which I had no business ever to have heard of, till I expected to see the smoke-blackened horse shake its unnaturally-arched neck and bony head at me, and the jockey stretch out those skinny fingers that clutched his whip, to reach me shivering at the other side of the dusky room.

Before turning up the small steep staircase, one caught a glimpse of a dark passage and a baize door leading to the little court, the cozy baby-house, kitchen, and the diminutive stable. Ah! the Apician feasts that issued from that baize door! What bisques, or ortolahs, or pâtés de foie gras of after days have ever come up to the crisp fried soles; the fair, portly boiled fowls; the deep, sugar-sweet, juicy damson-pies (creamed), which had their birth in that delicious region! There reigned Keziah the cook, twice too voluminous for her small domain, ruddy of skin and pale of hair, which always reminded me of the tight little tow curls on wooden poodles. With what a piping voice out of the bulk of that abounding person she used to welcome me, generally with the gift of some delicate cheesecake put by for me from the day's baking; what time I was conveyed into her dominions by Tackett, the parlour-maid, for the ostensible purpose of paying my respects to surly Bet, the brindled Tom cat, who, by the same unexplained fiction which gave him his feminine appellation, was always spoken of in the family as "she," and who usually resided, when at home, in the hottest corner of the large tin-lined plate-warmer. I remember that I regarded the said Bet with feelings of awe-struck reserve, owing chiefly to the ruffianly expression imparted to his bullet head by ears tattered in many a midnight fray, and one eye scarred and drawn down in unseemly fashion by some mêlée on the leads. My acquaintance with Bet never seemed to progress in all the years I knew him, and on all occasions of our limited intercourse Tackett was wont, by Aunt Bella's express command, to lift him gingerly out of his warm nest, and hold him, sulkily blinking, towards me, with his rusty fore-paws carefully enveloped in the folds of her spotless white apron. I think I see the good soul now, performing the presentation ceremony! Bony and lank she was, with a certain Judy-like angularity of form and raiment, which gave me the impression of her being made to fold up, and never coming quite straight at the joints.

How plainly I recal her kindly freckled face, which seemed all the longer for the nose stopping short midway between the forehead and chin, her iron-grey strips of hair forming two regular little festoons above the friendly eyes, and her invariable lilac and yellow cap-ribbon, bending over me, small mite as I was, while I timidly paid my compliments to her muffled burden, and curiously watched her deposit it again in the chimney-corner.

On the little landing-place at the top of the stairs opened the doors of godpapa's study and Aunt Bella's sitting-room. In this latter chamber I was almost sure to find her on those high red-letter days when, leaving my little brothers and sisters in the detested trammels of a deaf governess and Goldsmith's Abridgment, I was promoted to the signal honour of dining and passing the evening in Meadow-row. Her seat was beside one of the windows, two of which looked towards the sea and the shadowy copse wood of Stony Point, and a third towards the road leading up to Meadow-row. Her sight was beginning to fail her even in those early days, dear soul! and before her death she lost it almost entirely; but she was always busy when I came in, sometimes with certain long narrow strips of snow-white lambswool netting, sometimes over a little green baize-covered frame with rattling bobbins, whereon she manufactured silken stay-laces and braiding of gay colours, while I stood by, delightedly watching the mysteries of its confection, as her delicate little brown hands (a pretty hand and foot were Aunt Bella's chief beauties) ordered the mazes of the truant threads with that instinctive skill and tact which tells so sadly of coming blindness.

The first hour or two of my visit to Aunt Bella was sure to be spent in this cheerful sitting-room. It was rather low-ceiled, rather misshapen, with an arch somehow cutting it across the middle where no arch should be, and a dove-coloured and white paper on the walls rather the worse for wear, and bearing, as to its design, a resemblance to sheaves of monster stinging-nettles. The carpet was dove-coloured and green, dove-coloured and green the chintz of the curtains and furniture, and it was very sunny, very quiet, and pleasantly fragrant with huge posies of pinks or carnations all the summer long. There stood the marvel of art, the bright-rubbed mahogany table, the middle portion of whose upper surface slid out, and, being turned over, displayed, to my never wearied view, the wonders of an inlaid chess-board and draught-board in beautifully shaded

woods, while appliances for backgammon occupied the uncovered recess below.

There, too, in a queer corner niche behind the large china-bowl, with its bunch of white and pheasant-eyed pinks, or dark red clover, and coquettish pink carnations, was the precious sarcophagus-like casket of black shagreen with silver claws and lock, within which lived, in faded red velvet, three beautifully chased little silver canisters of old Louis Quatorze fashion, which used to be solemnly displayed by Tackett for my special delectation. They had graced the tea-table of ancient mother-in-law Vance, as they had that of her mother before her, in company with the Nankin china, what time godpapa had brought his poor little dark-skinned bride home to be its sunshine, and I delighted to trace out the mailed arm with a dagger which was the family crest, and the strangely twisted M.V., standing for Millicent Vance, which lurked half hidden among the graceful boss-work and tracery. I believe the tiny canisters were never used even on the grandest occasions in Meadow-row, and a small portion of the crusty old mother-in-law's delicate green and black tea, and a few small lumps of sparry-looking sugar, yet lurked (as my inquisitive childish eyes soon found out) in their recesses, giving the whole apparatus, I could not have told why, a delightful flavour of mysterious antiquity to me.

Sometimes, but this was not in those remotest days of all, Aunt Bella would be coaxed to tell me stories as dinner-time drew near; and then she and I and the braiding-frame took up our station at the window commanding those erratic flights of steps on the flank of Stony Point, and I had to keep watch the while, and give her warning as soon as I saw godpapa, easily distinguishable by his halting gait and his green umbrella, making his slow way down them crab-fashion. I verily believe that one of the sharpest pangs Aunt Bella felt under the misfortune of her loss of sight, was the fading out of that beloved figure, fainter and ever fainter month by month, as she watched its return at the accustomed hour. I remember a wistful straining look in her loving hazel-brown eyes, turned towards the well-known path as often as I announced godpapa's approach, and then a sudden dropping of the lids and a patient struggling little sigh, whose significance I feel now far better than I could then.

The story-telling was always broken off when godpapa loomed on the horizon; but it was very delightful while it lasted, though my favourite giants and enchanters performed no parts in it. I do not think Aunt Bella had much taste for the marvellous, for I know I more than once set her nodding over her netting-pins by my rambling attempts to interest her in the loves of Badoura and Camaralzaman (he wrote his name so in my day, though I suppose it has long since been correctly broken up into syllables), and the midnight journey through the air of fair-faced Bedreddin of the cream-tarts from Cairo to Damascus in the arms of a jinn or geni, as we ignorantly phrased it, when Monsieur Galland's bad translation re-translated was our ne plus ultra of romance.

A LESSON WELL LEARNT.

When the shadow of death hung over the Italian campaign, from which Italy knew how to take more liberty than it was meant that she should have, a citizen of Geneva, M. Henri Dunant, had his heart strengthened for noble labours by the recollection of the work done by Florence Nightingale in the Crimea. If there must be wars, why may they not be fought out by civilised nations with common recognition of the common duties of humanity? What if there were a General European Sanitary Commission? By his energetic labour competent men of many countries were brought together last year in the International Congress upon this question at Geneva—our Inspector-General of Hospitals, then representing Great Britain, by authority of our Secretary of War, with competent official deputies from France, and from Austria, and from Russia, and from Prussia, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Baden and Hesse, Hanover and Holland.

We know not what may come of the movement thus commenced, but we are glad to learn, from a little book called "A Woman's Example and a Nation's Work" (published by Ridgway), that in the midst of all the miseries of civil war in America the lesson taught by Florence Nightingale has not been lost upon a kindred people. The newspapers tell all the battle stories, and have enabled us to sup full of the horrors of the strife. Of the pity, and the deeds of mercy it engenders, we have not been told all we might hear.

The women on each side connected themselves at the outbreak of the war with the great work of healing and solace. The South has assuredly and certainly not been behind the North in generous self-sacrifice, but from the South few records come to us as yet; at present it is only of what has been done in the North that we can tell the tale.

The women began their work of mercy by filling churches, schoolrooms, and the large houses of many wealthy persons, with lint-scrapers, cutters, folders, and packers of the linen they gave to the use of the wounded. Then they organised themselves, first in New York, into a "Woman's Central Association of Relief;" like bodies were constituted elsewhere, and advice was sought from men of experience. They were advised to ascertain what government could and would do in the direction to which their work tended, then to work with it, and by their own liberality of gifts and labour, supplement its unavoidable short-comings. The clergyman of New York, who was foremost in giving this counsel, the Rev. Doctor Bellows, accompanied by three of the chief physicians of New York, Doctors Van Buren, Harris, and Harsen, went, therefore, in deputation

to Washington for conference with the Secretary of War. They represented not only the "Woman's Central Association," but also the Advisory Committee of the Boards of Physicians and Surgeons of the New York hospitals, and the New York Medical Association for furnishing Hospital Supplies in aid of the Army. The three bodies were all acting harmoniously together in turning to the best account the free gifts from the City and State of New York, designed in aid of the comfort and security of the troops. They petitioned for some rigour in inspection of volunteers, that unsuitable persons might not be sent to certain death in the army; the Woman's Association was about to send for service in the general hospitals of the army one hundred picked and trained female nurses, and they asked that the War Department should be content to receive on wages during actual duty as many of such nurses as the exigencies of the campaign might require. They suggested, also, the appointment of a Sanitary Commission, which President Lincoln scoffed at as a "fifth wheel to the military coach." This memorial was very coldly received by the War Department and the Medical Bureau of the army. The United States Sanitary Commission, which has by this time turned to right use in works of health and mercy, voluntary contributions amounting to about two millions of money, got its first lift towards existence in a note of recommendation from Dr. R. C. Wood, acting surgeon-general to the United States army.

The four delegates then at once sent in a sketch of the plan of such a commission, specifying all they asked for it from the government; no new legal powers whatever, and none of the public money; but simply official public recognition during the war, or until it should be found unserviceable, and a room in one of the public buildings in Washington or elsewhere with stationery and other insignia of a recognised public office. The object of the desired commission would be "to bring to bear upon the health, comfort and morale of the troops, the fullest and ripest teachings of sanitary science in its application to military life;" directing particular attention, for example, to the materiel of the volunteer force, and to such subjects as diet and cookery, clothing, and precaution against damp, cold, heat, malaria, infection &c.; tents, camping-ground, transports, transitory depôts with their exposures, camp police; organisation of hospitals, hospital supplies, regulations of the patriotic service of the capable women offering themselves as nurses; the questions of ambulances, of field service, of extra medical aid, and whatever else relates to the care or cure of the sick and wounded.

Reluctant consent was at last given to the establishment of such a commission, in a document of which the last paragraph thus expressed the official contempt it excited: "The commission will exist until the Secretary of War shall otherwise direct, *unless sooner dissolved by its own action.*" It is something to know that there is a Circumlocution Office across the Atlantic.

Yet at that time the army suddenly quadrupled was deficient in the commonest requisites of clothing, bedding, and hospital staff, while the local soldier's aid societies founded in different districts for the succour each of its own particular body of volunteers, bewildered by the marchings and counter-marchings of the distant regiments, were wasting much good energy. One of the first difficult labours of the Commission was to prove to these local bodies the short-sightedness of their provincial allies, and get them to throw all their resources into the organisation of one common national work. One by one the work of woman's love that strove to follow the particular fortunes of brothers and friends was gathered into one great national effort, and the local aid societies became branches of the commission, with Mr. Frederick Law Olmsted for its secretary, that strove to secure the well-being of the army, and detect the more unwholesome blots upon its discipline wherever they might be. Influential men in every part of the country now became unpaid advocates of the commission as "Associate Members;" circulars setting forth the wants of the army were widely diffused; sanitary agitation was kept up; directors of insurance companies were made to understand their interest in the well-being and the health of the volunteer.

Then it was found necessary to break down the exclusiveness of state sovereignty, and, for right organisation of the conveyance of the bales provided for use of the sick, establish central depôts for districts, determined not by political predilections, but by the course of railways, rivers, and canals. One hundred and twenty towns thus became auxiliary to Cleveland in Ohio, and twelve hundred and twenty-six accepted the City of New York as their centre. The Commission sent also sanitary inspectors to the camps and camp hospitals, and has received and tabulated some fifteen hundred of their reports, each consisting of answers to a set of one hundred and eighty printed questions.

Meanwhile, the government had taken no step towards the organisation for war purposes of the Medical Bureau, beyond the appointment of a Surgeon-General, who at once pronounced against the Sanitary Commission, and declared that "he would have nothing to do with it;" for it was "a perilous conception to allow any such outside body to come into being." The Commission, however, having been already authorised by government, he consented to its action for the volunteers on condition that it never meddled with the regular troops.

This wonderful gentleman confined himself to the maintenance of every old regulation, and resisted every attempt at "innovation" to adapt what might have sufficed for the case of a bush-fighting army of twelve thousand, to the greater needs of a tremendous civil war. So there arose civil war between the Sanitary Commission and the Surgeon-General; and the Commission, working by deputations to the government, complaints from army officers, and

memorials to Congress, procured the passing of a bill, drawn up by its own Executive Committee, reorganising fundamentally the medical department of the army, appointing a body of general inspectors, and substituting for the old system of seniority, promotion for competency without regard to grade or age. This victory over routine having been won, the Commission itself sought the most competent man for Surgeon-General, and endeavoured to forestal any chance of an appointment by favouritism into which the Secretary of War might be tempted. The Commission again won its battle, and secured the promotion of Dr. W. A. Hammond, Assistant-Surgeon on the Medical Staff, to the post of Surgeon-General, an advance from the rank of first lieutenant, with charge of a single hospital, to that of brigadier-general, with the entire control of the Medical Department of the Army. With its own man—a competent man, who had every reason to be grateful to it—thus in authority, the Sanitary Commission had its way made very straight. Dr. Hammond revised his list of subordinates with a bold hand, got rid of the obstructive and incompetent men, and honestly sought the best help in organisation of hospitals, foundation of an army medical school, and so forth. Before the civil war, the United States army rivalled the Austrian in exclusiveness and firm adherence to routine; and who can tell what tales of pestilence we might have heard, but for the victory thus won on behalf of woman's work in time of peril?

A part of the business of the Sanitary Commission was to diffuse gratuitously among the army surgeons, practical pamphlets of information upon military hygiène, and the most important points of army medicine and surgery. Such pamphlets were the "Directions to Army Surgeons on the Battle-field," by our own Guthrie, and the "Advice as to Camping," issued by the British Sanitary Commission at the time of the Crimean war; pamphlets on "Pain and Anæsthetics," and on "Hemorrhage from Wounds, and the best Means of Arresting it," by the father of American surgery, Dr. Valentine Mott; pamphlets on army vaccination, amputations, treatment of fractures, scurvy, fevers, &c. The largely increased number of army surgeons had to be drawn from civil life, and really needed information as to the new forms of practice in the field; while everywhere the teachings of Florence Nightingale were actively diffused. Again, over the wide surface of the states involved in war, there was great variation of latitude, and almost every imaginable difference of ground, producing local differences in the character and aspect of disease. Special investigation was made of this subject, not only for the information of the medical staff, but as a necessary guide to the right distribution of the requisite supplies.

When, at the beginning of the war, the lines of action corresponded with the course of navigable rivers, floating hospitals accompanied the armies. Here, with perhaps five hundred or a thousand sick soldiers arranged in a single river steamer, well-born American women and some English volunteers were fearless and faithful nurses. Let us see them at work. A lady speaks:

"We were called to go on board the Wissahickon, from thence to the Sea-shore, and run down in the latter to West Point, to bring off twenty-five men said to be lying there sick and destitute. Two doctors went with us. After hunting an hour for the Sea-shore in vain, and having got as low as Cumberland, we decided (*we* being Mrs. —— and I, for the doctors were new and docile, and glad to leave the responsibility upon us women) to push on in the tug, rather than leave the men another night on the ground, as a heavy storm of wind and rain had been going on all day. The pilot remonstrated but the captain approved; and if the firemen had not suddenly let out the fires, and detained us two hours, we might have got our men on board and returned comfortably soon after dark. But the delay lost us the precious daylight. It was night before the last man was got on board. There were fifty-six of them—ten *very* sick ones. The boat had a little shelter-cabin. As we were laying mattresses on the floor, whilst the doctors were finding the men, the captain stopped us, refusing to let us put typhoid fever below the deck, on account of the crew, he said, and threatening to push off, at once, from the shore. Mrs. —— and I looked at him. I did the terrible and she the pathetic,—and he abandoned the contest. The return-passage was rather an anxious one. The river is much obstructed with sunken ships and trees; the night was dark; and we had to feel our way, slackening speed every ten minutes; If we had been alone it wouldn't have mattered. but to have fifty men unable to move upon our hands, was too heavy a responsibility not to make us anxious. The captain and pilot said the boat was leaky, and remarked awfully 'that the water was six fathoms deep about there;' but we saw their motive and were not scared. We were safe alongside the Spaulding by midnight; but Mr. Olmsted's tone of voice, as he said, 'You don't know how glad I am to see you,' showed how much he had been worried. And yet it was the best thing we could have done, for three, perhaps five, of the men would have been dead before morning. To-day (Sunday) they are living, and likely to live."

A plan for the swift construction of a good receiving hospital, the notion of great soup caldrons on wheels for feeding the sick and wounded after battle, scrofulous inspection, active agitation and investigation of the question of what is to be done in the future with the disabled soldiers of three years of war, are among the wholesome work of the Commission, which has been able, after every great battle, to despatch a voluntary contribution of necessaries, in addition to the provision made by the medical department of the army. Thus, after the second battle of Bull Run—when General Pope's army, with a loss of sixteen thousand in killed and wounded, was in retreat—the Confederates had

captured forty-three waggon-loads of medical stores. Within three days, sixteen waggon-loads of drugs and medicines, the gift of the country through the Sanitary Commission, were at the disposal of the army; and at Centreville, on the road from Bull Run to Washington, the Commission's agents served out to the wounded, who came fainting in by hundreds, hot beef-tea, soup and bread, and stimulants—gathered them into ambulances or hospitals—and otherwise helped them on to Washington. The Commission has always extended such help alike to friend or foe; the wounded Confederate who has been captured has been simply regarded as a sufferer.

These labourers on behalf of humanity even work under fire in the field relief corps that trot up their light waggons with stores, bandages, or other aid to the surgeons wherever men fall fastest, and after the battle hunt indefatigably for the straggling wounded. The Commission has organised, also, a distinct department of Special Relief for care of the sick among newly-arrived regiments; for providing temporary and gratuitous shelter and food to the soldier honourably discharged, while he is waiting in any city for his papers and his pay; for helping the helpless soldier in any conceivable way, by acting as his unpaid agent, or attorney; for protecting him against sharpers, or getting him railway tickets at reduced rates. With such views soldiers' "Homes" have been established throughout the North, and at the principal Home in Washington about a hundred thousand nights' lodgings, and three or four hundred thousand meals, have been gratuitously provided. The Commission has obtained Homes, too, for its own and the army's nurses when not in attendance on the sick, or preparing to depart for distant stations. Finally, the Commission charges itself with the duty of seeing that every soldier is decently buried, with a head-stone over his grave, and that a record is kept of the place of burial; or, that his body is forwarded to his friends.

The funds that support all this good work are voluntary gifts. The people of California sent, in one sum, the gold of their soil to the value of a hundred thousand pounds English money. Sanitary fairs have been lately held at different towns, at Chicago, Cincinnati, Rochester, Washington, &c. Brooklyn Fair lately contributed four hundred thousand dollars; and from the great fair just held at New York a million dollars were expected.

The Commission works openly; any one who will, may inspect its books. It pays its officers, buys waggons, charters ships, feeds horses and mules, pays rent of offices and warehouses, yet the entire cost of its management is under three per cent of its income. When, at the battle of Gettysburg, a waggon-load of the Commissioners' stores was captured, with three of its agents, the secretary of the Commission asked and obtained from the Confederate authorities their release, on the ground that they were non-combatants, and that throughout the war "the Sanitary Commission had never made any distinction in its benevolence between friend and foe."

If any one would estimate the value of such work in pursuance of a good example, let him remember that Miss Nightingale and the Crimean Commission found the British army in the East dying from disease at the rate of sixty per cent, or more than half its whole strength, in the year; and that, sanitary care having been taken, the death rate was reduced in the last five months of the campaign to twelve in a thousand! The army was made fifty-two times healthier! Our whole average yearly loss by disease in the Peninsular war, was a hundred and thirteen in a thousand; and the sanitary reforms made by Lord Herbert in the home life of our infantry are saving us now, every year, one life in every hundred men. The whole loss in our army by all diseases has been less in each of the last four years than it used to be from diseases of the lungs alone.

Most nobly have the American People struggled to amend this part of the record of their own disastrous struggle. We read much of sharp trading and selfish grasping, of boots with paper soles, and other cruel dealings of the wooden nutmeg school; but the support given by the American People (not American Contractors) to their armies, through the Sanitary Commission, tells a nobler tale. Thus, for example, it may seem a small matter that the Commission makes part of its preventive work to consist in the raising of fresh vegetables for army use; but without fresh vegetables troops can hardly be saved from scurvy. Dr. Frank H. Hamilton, a distinguished medical inspector in the army of Rosecrans, expressed, in a report, his full belief that "one barrel of potatoes per annum is to the government equal to one man." At one time, when the success of the western army, in a hazardous operation, was becoming hopeless, by reason of scurvy among the troops, and when the consequent advertisement of a commissary for fifty thousand bushels of potatoes and a corresponding supply of other vegetables found no trader able or willing to be responsible for their delivery, the Commission set to work, and, collecting voluntary gifts in kind from the fields and gardens of the districts, supplied gratuitously, within a month, six thousand barrels of fresh vegetables, restored the health of the troops, and so, though a non-combatant, did really, by a brisk discharge of potatoes, change in that campaign the fortune of the war.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XII. DARKER AND DARKER.

There was an unusual depression at the villa—each had his or her own load of anxiety, and each felt that an atmosphere of gloom was thickening around, and, without being able to say why or wherefore, that dark days were coming.

"Among your letters this morning was there none from the vicar, Mr. Calvert?" asked Miss Grainger, as he sat smoking his morning cigar under the porch of the cottage.

"No," said he, carelessly. "The post brought me nothing of any interest. A few reproaches from my friends about not writing, and relieving their anxieties about this unhappy business. They had it that I was killed—beyond that, nothing."

"But we ought to have heard from old Mr. Loyd before this. Strange, too, Joseph has not written."

"Stranger if he had! The very mention of my name as a referee in his affairs will make him very cautious with his pen."

"She is so fretted," sighed the old lady.

"I see she is, and I see she suspects, also, that you have taken me in your counsels. We are not as good friends as we were some time back."

"She really likes you, though—I assure you she does, Mr. Calvert. It was but t'other day she said, 'What would have become of us all this time back if Mad Harry—you know your nickname—if Mad Harry had not been here?'"

"That's not liking! That is merely the expression of a weak gratitude towards the person who helps to tide over a dreary interval. You might feel it for the old priest who played piquet with you, or the Spitz terrier that accompanied you in your walks."

"Oh, it's far more than that. She is constantly talking of your great abilities—how you might be this, that, and t'other. That, with scarcely an effort, you can master any subject, and without any effort at all always make yourself more agreeable than any one else."

"Joseph excepted?"

"No, she didn't even except him; on the contrary, she said, 'It was unfortunate for him to be exposed to such a dazzling rivalry—that your animal spirits alone would always beat him out of the field.'"

"Stuff and nonsense! If I wasn't as much his superior in talent as in temperament, I'd fling myself over that rock yonder, and make an end of it!" After a few seconds' pause he went on: "She may think what she likes of *me*, but one thing is plain enough—she does not love *him*. It is the sort of compassionating, commiserating estimate imaginative girls occasionally get up for dreary depressed fellows, constituting themselves discoverers of intellect that no one ever suspected—revealers of wealth that none had ever dreamed of. Don't I know scores of such who have poetised the most common-place of men into heroes, and never found out their mistake till they married them!"

"You always terrify me when you take to predicting, Mr. Calvert."

"Heaven knows, it's not my ordinary mood. One who looks so little into the future for himself has few temptations to do so for his friends."

"Why do you feel so depressed?"

"I'm not sure that I do feel depressed. I'm irritable, out of sorts, annoyed if you will; but not low or melancholy. Is it not enough to make one angry to see such a girl as Florry bestow her affections on that——Well, I'll not abuse him, but you *know* he is a 'cad'—that's exactly the word that fits him."

"It was no choice of mine," she sighed.

"That may be; but you ought to have been more than passive in the matter. Your fears would have prevented you letting your niece stop for a night in an unhealthy locality. You'd not have suffered her to halt in the Pontine Marshes; but you can see no danger in linking her whole future life to influences five thousand times more depressing. I tell you, and I tell you deliberately, that she'd have a far better chance of happiness with a scamp like myself."

"Ah, I need not tell you my own sentiments on that point," said she, with a deep sigh.

Calvert apparently set little store by such sympathy, for he rose, and throwing away the end of his cigar, stood looking out over the lake. "Here comes Onofrio, flourishing some letters in his hand. The idiot fancies the post never brings any but pleasant tidings."

"Let us go down and meet him," said Miss Grainger; and he walked along at her side in silence.

"Three for the Signor Capitano," said the boatman, "and one for the signorina," handing the letters as he landed.

"Drayton," muttered Calvert; "the others are strange to me."

"This is from Joseph. How glad poor Florry will be to get it."

"Don't defer her happiness, then," said he, half sternly; "I'll sit down on the rocks here and con over my less pleasant correspondence." One was from his lawyer, to state that outlawry could no longer be resisted, and that if his friends would not come forward at once with some satisfactory promise of arrangement, the law must take its course. "My friends," said he, with a bitter laugh, "which be they?" The next he opened was from the army agents, dryly setting forth that as he had left the service it was necessary he should take some immediate steps to liquidate some regimental claims against him, of which they begged to enclose the particulars. He laughed bitterly and scornfully as he tore the letter to fragments and threw the pieces into the water. "How well they know the man they threaten!" cried he, defiantly. "I'd like to know how much a drowning man cares for his duns?" He laughed again. "Now for Drayton. I hope this will be pleasanter than its predecessors." It was not very long, and it was as follows:

"The Rag, Tuesday.

"Dear Harry,—Your grateful compliments on the dexterity of my correspondence in the Meteor arrived at an unlucky moment, for some fellow had just written to the editor a real statement of the whole affair, and the next day came a protest, part French, part English, signed by Edward Rochfort, Lieutenant-Colonel; Gustavus Brooke, D.L.; George Law, M.D.; Alberic de Raymond, Vicomte, and Jules de Lassagnac. They sent for me to the office to see the document, and I threw all

imaginable discredit on its authenticity, but without success. The upshot is, *I* have lost my place as 'own correspondent,' and you are in a very bad way. The whole will appear in print to-morrow, and be read from Hudson's Bay to the Himalaya. I have done my best to get the other papers to disparage the statement, and have written all the usual bosh about condemning a man in his absence, and entreating the public to withhold its judgment, &c. &c.; but they all seem to feel that the tide of popular sentiment is too strong to resist, and you must be pilloried; prepare yourself, then, for a pitiless pelting, which, as parliament is not sitting, will probably have a run of three or four weeks.

"In any other sort of scrape, the fellows at the club here would have stood by you, but they shrink from the danger of this business, which I now see was worse than you told me. Many, too, are more angry with you for deserting B. than for shooting the other fellow; and though B. was an arrant snob, now that he is no more you wouldn't believe what shoals of good qualities they have discovered he possessed, and he is 'poor Bob' in the mouths of twenty fellows who would not have been seen in his company a month ago. There is, however, worse than all this: a certain Reppingham, or Reppengham, the father of B.'s wife, has either already instituted, or is about to institute, proceedings against you criminally. He uses ugly words, calls it a murder, and has demanded a warrant for your extradition and arrest at once. There is a story of some note you are said to have written to B., but which arrived when he was insensible, and was read by the people about him, who were shocked by its heartless levity. What is the truth as to this? At all events, Rep has got a vendetta fit on him, and raves like a Corsican for vengeance. Your present place of concealment, safe enough for duns, will offer no security against detectives. The bland blackguards with black whiskers know the geography of Europe as well as they know the blind alleys about Houndsditch. You must decamp, therefore; get across the Adriatic into Dalmatia, or into Greece. Don't delay, whatever you do, for I see plainly, that in the present state of public opinion, the fellow who captures you will come back here with a fame like that of Gérard the lion-killer. Be sure of one thing, if you were just as clean-handed in this business as I know you are not, there is no time now for a vindication. You *must* get out of the way, and wait. The clubs, the press, the swells at the Horse Guards, and the snobs at the War-office, are all against you, and there's no squaring your book against such long odds. I am well aware that no one gets either into or out of a scrape more easily than yourself; but don't treat this as a light one; don't fancy, above all, that I am giving you the darkest side of it, for, with all our frankness and free speech together, I couldn't tell you the language people hold here about it. There's not a man you ever bullied at mess, or beat at billiards, that is not paying off his scores to you now! And though you may take all this easily, don't undervalue its importance.

"I haven't got — and I don't suppose you care much now to get — any information about Loyd, beyond his being appointed something, Attorney-General's 'devil,' I believe, at Calcutta. I'd not have heard even so much, but that he was trying to get a loan, to make out his outfit, from Joel, and old Isaac told me who he was, and what he wanted. Joel thinks, from the state of the fellow's health, that no one will like to advance the cash, and if so, he'll be obliged to relinquish the place. You have not told me whether you wish this, or the opposite.

"I wish I could book up to you at such a moment as this, but I haven't got it. I send you all that I can scrape together, seventy odd; it is a post bill, and easily cashed anywhere. In case I hear of anything that may be imminently needed for your guidance, I'll telegraph to you the morrow after your receipt of this, addressing the message to the name Grainger, to prevent accidents. You must try and keep your friends from seeing the London papers so long as you stay with them. I suppose, when you leave, you'll not fret about the reputation that follows you. For the last time, let me warn you to get away to some place of safety, for if they can push matters to an arrest, things may take an ugly turn.

"They are getting really frightened here about India at last. Harris has brought some awful news home with him, and they'd give their right hands to have those regiments they sent off to China to despatch now to Calcutta. I know this will be all 'nuts' to you, and it is the only bit of pleasant tidings I have for you. Your old prediction about England being a third-rate power, like Holland, may not be so far from fulfilment as I used to think it. I wonder shall we ever have a fireside gossip over all these things again? At present, all looks too dark to get a peep into the future. Write to me at once, say what you mean to do, and believe me as ever, yours,

"A. Drayton.

"I have just heard that the lawyers are in doubt as to the legality of extradition, and Braddon declares dead against it. In the case they relied on, the man had come to England after being tried in France, thinking himself safe, as 'autrefois acquit;' but they found him guilty at the Old Bailey, and —— him. There's delicacy for you, after your own heart."

Calvert smiled grimly at his friend's pleasantry. "Here is enough trouble for any man to deal with. Duns, outlawry, and a criminal prosecution!" said he, as he replaced his letter in its envelope, and lighted his cigar. He had not been many minutes in the enjoyment of his weed, when he saw Miss Grainger coming hastily towards him. "I wish that old woman would let me alone, just now!" muttered he. "I have need of all my brains for my own misfortunes."

"It has turned out just as I predicted, Mr. Calvert," said she, pettishly. "Young Loyd is furious at having his pretensions referred to you, and will not hear of it. His letter to Florence is all but reproachful, and she has gone home with her eyes full of tears. This note for you came as an enclosure."

Calvert took the note from her hands, and laying it beside him on the rock, smoked on without speaking.

"I knew everything that would happen!" said Miss Grainger. "The old man gave the letter you wrote to his son, who immediately sat down and wrote to Florry. I have not seen the letter myself, but Milly declares that it goes so far as to say, that if Florry admits of any advice or interference on your part, it is tantamount to a desire to break off the engagement. He declares, however, that he neither can nor will believe such a thing to be possible. That he knows she is ignorant of the whole intrigue. Milly assures me that was the word, intrigue; and she read it twice over to be certain. He also says something, which I do not quite understand, about my being led beyond the bounds of judgment by what he calls a traditional reverence for the name you bear—but one thing is plain enough, he utterly rejects the reference to you, or, indeed, to any one now but Florence herself, and says, 'This is certainly a case for your own decision, and I will accept of none other than yours.'"

"Is there anything more about me than you have said?" asked Calvert, calmly.

"No, I believe not. He begs, in the postscript, that the enclosed note may be given to you, that's all."

Calvert took a long breath; he felt as if a weight had been removed from his heart, and he smoked on in silence.

"Won't you read it," cried she, eagerly. "I am burning to hear what he says."

"I can tell you just as well without breaking the seal," said he, with a half scornful smile. "I know the very tone and style of it, and I recognise the pluck with which such a man, when a thousand miles off, dares to address one like myself."

"Read it, though; let me hear his own words!" cried she.

"I'm not impatient for it," said he; "I have had a sufficient dose of bitters this morning, and I'd just as soon spare myself the acrid petulance of this poor creature."

"You are very provoking, I must say," said she, angrily, and turned away towards the house. Calvert watched her till she disappeared behind a copse, and then hastily broke open the letter.

"Middle Temple, Saturday.

"Sir,—My father has forwarded to me a letter which, with very questionable good taste, you addressed to him. The very relations which subsisted between us when we parted, might have suggested a more delicate course on your part. Whatever objections I might then, however, have made to your interference in matters personal to myself, have now become something more than mere objections, and I flatly declare that I will not listen to one word from a man whose name is now a shame and a disgrace throughout Europe. That you may quit the roof which has sheltered you hitherto without the misery of exposure, I have forborne in my letter to narrate the story which is on every tongue here; but, as the price of this forbearance, I desire and I exact that you leave the villa on the day you receive this, and cease from that day forth to hold any intercourse with the family who reside in it. If I do not, therefore, receive a despatch by telegraph, informing me that you accede to these conditions, I will forward by the next post the full details which the press of England is now giving of your infamous conduct, and of the legal steps which are to be instituted against you.

"Remember distinctly, sir, that I am only in this pledging myself for that short interval of time which will suffer you to leave the house of those who offered you a refuge against calamity—not crime—and whose shame would be overwhelming if they but knew the character of him they sheltered. You are to leave before nightfall of the day this reaches, and never to return. You are to abstain from all correspondence. I make no conditions as to future acquaintanceship, because I know that were I even so minded, no efforts of mine could save you from that notoriety which a few days more will attach to you, never to leave you.

"I am, your obedient servant,

"Joseph Loyd."

Calvert tried to laugh as he finished the reading of this note, but the attempt was a failure, and a sickly pallor spread over his face, and his lips trembled. "Let me only meet you, I don't care in what presence, or in what place," muttered he, "and you shall pay dearly for this. But now to think of myself. This is just the sort of fellow to put his threat into execution, the more since he will naturally be anxious to get me away from this. What is to be done? With one week more I could almost answer for my success. Ay, Mademoiselle Florry, you were deeper in the toils than you suspected. The dread of me that once inspired a painful feeling had grown into a sort of self-pride that elevated her in her own esteem. She was so proud of her familiarity with a wild animal, and so vain of her influence over him! So pleasant to say, 'See, savage as he is, he'll not turn upon *me!*' And now to rise from the table, when the game is all but won! Confound the fellow, how he has wrecked my fortunes! As if I had not enough, too, on my hands without this!" And he walked impatiently to and fro, like a caged animal in fretfulness. "I wanted to think over Drayton's letter calmly and deliberately, and here comes this order, this command, to be up and away—away from the only spot in which I can say I enjoyed an hour's peace for years and years, and from the two or three left to me, of all the world, who think it

no shame to bestow on me a word or a look of kindness. The fellow is peremptory — he declares I must leave to-day." For some time he continued to walk, muttering to himself, or moodily silent. At last he cried out, "Yes; I have it! I'll go up to Milan, and cash this bill of Drayton's. When there, I'll telegraph to Loyd, which will show I have left the villa. That done, I'll return here, if it be but for a day; and who knows what a day will bring forth?"

"Who has commands for Milan?" said he, gaily entering the drawing-room, where Miss Grainger sat, holding a half-whispering conversation with Emily.

"Milan! are you going to Milan?"

"Yes; only for a day. A friend has charged me with a commission that does not admit of delay, and I mean to run up this afternoon, and be down by dinner-time to-morrow."

"I'll go and see if Florry wants anything from the city," said Miss Grainger, as she arose and left the room.

"Poor Florry! she is so distressed by that letter she received this morning. Joseph has taken it in such ill part that you should have been consulted by Aunt Grainger, and reproaches her for having permitted what she really never heard of. Not that, as she herself says, she admits of any right on his part to limit her source of advice. She thinks that it is somewhat despotic in him to say, 'You shall not take counsel except with leave from *me*.' She knows that this is the old vicar's doing, and that Joseph never would have assumed that tone without being put up to it."

"That is clear enough; but I am surprised that your sister saw it."

"Oh, she is not so deplorably in love as to be blinded."

CHAPTER XIII. AGAIN TO MILAN.

"Poor Bob! You were standing on that balcony with a very jaunty air, smoking your Cuban the last time I passed here," said Calvert, as he looked up at the windows of the Hôtel Royale at Milan, while he drove on to another and less distinguished hotel. He would have liked greatly to have put up at the Royale, and had a chat with its gorgeous landlord over the Reppinghams, how long they stayed, and whither they went, and how the young widow bore up under the blow, and what shape old Rep's grief assumed.

No squeamishness as to the terms that might have been used towards himself would have prevented his gratifying this wish. The obstacle was purely financial. He had told the host, on leaving, to pay a thousand francs for him that he had lost at play, and it was by no means convenient now to reimburse him. The bank had just closed as he arrived, so there was nothing for it but to await its opening the next morning. His steps were then turned to the Telegraph-office. The message to Loyd was in these words: "Your letter received. I am here, and leave to-morrow."

"Of course the fellow will understand that I have obeyed his high behest, and I shall be back at Orta in time to catch the post on its arrival, and see whether he has kept faith with me or not. If there be no newspapers there for the villa I may conclude it is all right." This brief matter of business over, he felt like one who had no further occasion for care. When he laid down his burden he could straighten his back, no sense of the late pressure remaining to remind him of the load that had pressed so heavily. He knew this quality in himself, and prized it highly. It formed part of what he used boastfully to call his "Philosophy," and he contrasted it proudly with the condition of those fellows who, instead of rebounding under pressure, collapsed, and sunk never to rise more. The vanity with which he regarded himself supplied him with a vindictive dislike to the world, who could suffer a fellow endowed and gifted as he was to be always in straits and difficulties. He mistook—a very common mistake, by the way—a capacity to enjoy, for a nature deservant of enjoyment, and he thought it the greatest injustice to see scores of well-off people who possessed neither his own good constitution nor his capacity to endure dissipation uninjured. "Wretches not fit to live," as he said, and assuredly most unfit to live the life which he alone prized or cared for. He dined somewhat sumptuously at one of the great restaurants. "He owed it to himself," he said, after all that dreary cookery of the villa, to refresh his memory of the pleasures of the table, and he ordered a flask of Marcobrunner that cost a Napoleon.

He was the caressed of the waiters, and escorted to the door by the host. There is no supremacy so soon recognised as that of wealth, and Calvert, for a few hours, gave himself up to the illusion that he was rich. As the Opera was closed, he went to one of the smaller theatres, and sat out for a while one of those dreariest of all dreary things, a comedy by the "immortal Goldoni!" Immortal indeed, so long as sleep remains an endowment of humanity! He tried to interest himself in a plot wherein the indecency was only veiled by the dulness, and where the language of the drawing-room never rose above the tone of the servants' hall, and left the place in disgust, to seek anywhere, or any how, something more amusing than this.

Without well knowing how, he found himself at the door of the Jettone, the hell he had visited when he was last at Milan.

"They shall sup me, at all events," said he, as he deposited his hat and cane in the antechamber. The rooms were crowded, and it was some time before Calvert could approach the play-table, and gain a view of the company. He recognised many of the former visitors. There sat the pretty woman with the blonde ringlets, her diamond-studded fingers carelessly playing with the gold pieces before her; there was the pale student-like boy—he seemed a mere boy—with his dress-cravat disordered, and his hair dishevelled, just as he had seen him last; and there was the old man, whose rouleau had cost

Calvert all his winnings. He looked fatigued and exhausted, and seemed as if dropping asleep over his game, and yet the noise was deafening—the clamour of the players, the cries of the croupier, the clink of glasses, and the clink of gold!

"Now to test the adage that says when a man is pelted by all other ill luck, that he'll win at play," said Calvert, as he threw, without counting them, several Napoleons on the table. His venture was successful, and so was another, and another after it.

"This is yours, sir," said she of the blonde ringlets, handing him a hundred franc-piece that had rolled amongst her own.

"Was it not to suggest a partnership that it went there?" said he, smiling courteously.

"Who knows?" said she, half carelessly, half invitingly.

"Let us see what our united fortunes will do. This old man is dozing, and does not care for the game. Would you favour me with your place, sir, and take your rest with so much more comfort on one of those luxurious sofas yonder?"

"No!" said the old man, sternly. "I have as much right to be here as you."

"The legal right I'm not going to dispute. It is simply a matter of expediency."

"Do you mean to stake all that gold, sir?" interrupted the croupier, addressing Calvert, who, during this brief discussion, had suffered his money to remain till it had been doubled twice over.

"Ay, let it stay there," said he, carelessly.

"What have you done that makes you so lucky?" whispered the blonde ringlets. "See, you have broken the bank!"

"What have I done, do you mean in the way of wickedness?" said he, laughing, as the croupiers gathered in a knot to count over the sum to be paid to him. "Nearly everything. I give you leave to question me—so far as your knowledge of the Decalogue goes—what have I not done?" And so they sauntered down the room, side by side and sat down on a sofa, chatting and laughing pleasantly together, till the croupier came loaded with gold and notes to pay all Calvert's winnings.

"What was it the old fellow muttered as he passed?" said Calvert; "he spoke in German, and I didn't understand him."

"It was something about a line in your forehead that will bring you bad luck yet."

"I have heard that before," cried he, springing hastily up. "I wish I could get him to tell me more;" and he hastened down the stairs after the old man, but when he gained the street he missed him; he hurried in vain on this side and that; no trace of him remained. "If I were given to the credulous, I'd say that was the fiend in person," muttered Calvert, as he slowly turned towards his inn.

He tried in many ways to forget the speech that troubled him; he counted over his winnings; they were nigh fourteen thousand francs; he speculated on all he might do with them; he plotted and planned a dozen roads to take, but do what he might, the old man's sinister look and dark words were before him, and he could only lie awake thinking over them till day broke.

Determined to return to Orta in time to meet the post, he drove to the bank, just as it was open for business, and presented his bill for payment.

"You have to sign your name here," said a voice he thought he remembered, and, looking up, saw the old man of the play-table.

"Did we not meet last night?" whispered Calvert, in a low voice.

The other shook his head in dissent.

"Yes, I cannot be mistaken; you muttered a prediction in German as you passed me, and I know what it meant."

Another shake of the head was all his reply.

"Come, come, be frank with me; your secret, if it be one to visit that place, is safe with me. What leads you to believe I am destined to evil fortune."

"I know nothing of you! I want to know nothing," said the old man, rudely, and turned to his books.

"Well, if your skill in prophecy be not greater than in politeness, I need not fret about you," said Calvert, laughing; and he went his way.

With that superstitious terror that tyrannises over the minds of incredulous men weighing heavily on his heart, he drove back to Orta. All his winnings of the night before could not erase from his memory the dark words of the old man's prediction. He tried to forget, and then he tried to ridicule it. "So easy," thought he, "for that old withered mummy to cast a shadow on the path of a fellow full of life, vigour, and energy, like myself. He has but to stand one second in my sunshine! It is, besides, the compensation that age and decrepitude exact for being no longer available for the triumphs and pleasures of life." Such were the sort of reasonings by which he sought to console himself, and then he set to plan out a future—all the things that he could, or might, or could not do.

Just as he drove into Orta the post arrived at the office, and he got out and entered as was his wont, to obtain his letters before the public distribution had commenced.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE ONLY CITY OF THE WORLD WORTH LIVING IN.

PARIS, dear, delightful, inimitable, unrivalled Paris, city of delights, city of art, and taste, and luxury; of fashion, and elegance, and wit. Paris, unapproached among earth's most delicious haunts. Paris, queen of the world. Paris, the only city of the world worth living in.

Certainly. This is the refrain to a very old song. You and I, and everybody else, have been singing it, always heartily, and with a kind of sincerity, never ad nauseam, ever since per railway or per diligence we first set foot in Lutetia The Beloved. There is no need to renew in mature age the vaccination we have had in our youth. The Paris virus, once imbibed, is not to be eradicated.

Of course Paris is enchanting. Everybody knows it; everybody says it. One may toil and grow rich and die in London; one may drag on an existence at Vienna, vegetate at Brussels, prowl through the year at Florence, be bored at Rome, hipped at Venice, terrified at St. Petersburg, stupified at Berlin, excited at New York, soothed at Boston, deluded at Dublin, intoxicated at Edinburgh, astonished at Seville, amused at Milan, occupied at Amsterdam, fatigued at Naples, absorbed at Manchester, salted at Liverpool, cured at Brighton, and killed at New Orleans; but if one wants to live, to see life, to enjoy life, to make the most of life, there is clearly no place in the world for man or woman but Paris.

This is an assertion scarcely worth arguing upon. Opinions are unanimous. Of course there are no bonnets in the world worth the Paris bonnets. The Boulevards are unequalled among streets. Nobody knows how to cook, out of the Palais Royal. No pictures worth looking at are to be seen out of the Louvre, except, indeed, those at the Luxembourg. Why pursue a theme so trite? While I, a single Englishman, am dully sounding the praises of Paris, fifty thousand Germans, Italians, Swedes, Russians, Poles, Czechs, Moldo-Wallachs, Montenegrins, Magyars, and Mussulmans, are crying out that Parisian life is the life of lives, and that the only city worth living in is Paris.

Lily Floris lived in Paris for seven years. Until she was fifteen years of age, she never passed that gloomy porte cochère in the outer wall of the Pension Marcassin. It was her penitentiary, her prison-house; and a terrible one it was.

There was a vast playground; and in it, when she was not under punishment, she was privileged to walk. Beyond its precincts she never stirred. She never went home for the holidays. The vacations at the Pension Marcassin were three days from the Jour de l'An, the first of January, to the fourth—a week at Easter—a month from the first of August to the second of September. These holidays came and went for seven years, but she remained immured. She had seven years' penal servitude. When the girls were away, long tasks were set her, and these she learnt and wrote, and repeated or submitted to Mademoiselle Marcassin, or, in her absence, to the governess left in charge. It was a dreary probation, and she was Quite Alone.

Lonelier when, at the end of the second year of her captivity, Polly Marygold took her departure. The girl could not refrain from sundry ebullitions of joy at her deliverance from a school of which she was weary, and from a schoolmistress whom she hated, but she was nevertheless unfeignedly sorry to leave Lily.

"It's like deserting you in a desert island, my darling," she cried, as she kissed her and kissed her again, on the well-remembered morning of her going away; "or, rather, it's like leaving you in a savage country full of cannibals. For cannibals they are here, and nothing else."

"But you will write to me, Polly? You will, won't you, my dear?" poor Lily replied, twining herself round the neck of the only friend but one she had ever had in the world. "Oh! say that you will write to me, that you will come and see me, or I shall break my heart. I am so very very lonely."

"I know you are, my pet. I wish to goodness you were coming with me. Who knows! Perhaps they'll turn you out as a governess some of these days. Although," she continued, with a profoundly sagacious look, "my own opinion is, that you are heiress to immense estates and vast wealth, in England, and that

some wicked wicked people are keeping you out of it. Think of their changing your name, too, the cruel wretches!"

"But you will write, Polly, won't you; you know you promised to?"

"Yes, my darling," returned Miss Marygold, with a touch of sadness in her voice; "I'll write, but goodness knows whether you will ever get my letters. Madame will 'sequestrate' them, or I'm very much mistaken. As for coming to see you, the cross old thing will never let me darken her doors again, I'm certain. She has spent my premium, and got all she could out of dear pa, and it's very little she cares about me now. I wonder whether they paid a premium with you, or so much a year!"

And so, Polly Marygold took her merry face and her wavy black hair away, and the world became indeed a desert to Lily. Polly had obtained a situation as governess in the family of a French nobleman, in Brittany. It would be a relief, she said, to find some children who were to be brought up as ladies, and not as governesses.

It has been said that Lily's very name had been changed. Not much stress was laid upon her retaining or bearing her christian name of Lily; only, as Lilies were numerous in the school, she was never so addressed in the class-room. But her appellation of Floris was rigorously condemned, and she was informed that henceforward she was to be Mademoiselle Pauline. It did not much matter. Lily felt as though she had no longer a name at all. Once, going up into a great store-room where the girls' boxes were kept, she found that "Miss Floris" had been painted out from the well-remembered trunk with which Cutwig and Co. had fitted her out; and she burst into bitter tears, less at the thought of the social extinction with which it was sought to visit her, than at the recollection of the two hours passed in the old City shop where Mr. Ranns and 'Melia were so kind to her, and where Cutwig and Co. fitted out all the world.

Often, too, she thought of that tall gentleman who had kissed her on the forehead at Greenwich, and talked to the strange lady in the balcony. The minutest circumstance connected with the dinner dwelt steadfastly in her mind. She could see the splendid old gentleman with his chains and rings, and his fringe of white whiskers; the military gentleman with his black stock, dyed moustachios, strapped-down trousers and spurs; she could hear the laughter, and the clinking of the glasses, and the wine gurgling; the warm odour of the viands came up gently again to titillate her sense of smell. She could see the grey Thames water, the lagging barges, the ships slowly sailing across the field of view, the Essex shore in the distance, the ruddy sunset behind all. But the tall gentleman who had held her between his knees, and filled her plate at dinner, and fondled her, was salient and prominent above all these things. His hair, his clothes, his kindly drawl, his pitying eyes, his hands, so strong-looking yet so tender, were all present to her. And the more she thought of him, the more she wept; but why she wept, she could not tell.

Then would pass before her a terrible image. That night in the park. How soft and calm the scene was. How happy and peaceful the deer seemed. With what quiet cheerfulness the distant lights, in the hospital wards, in the houses of the town, in the rigging of the ships, twinkled! But then the fierce and angry words of the strange lady came up in grim contrast, and marred all this tranquil loveliness. Lily remembered how she had gripped her arm, and looked upon her with darkling, lowering eyes. And she wept no more; but shuddered.

Now, all had changed. Great gulfs yawned between the few and troubled episodes of her young life. The last was the gloomiest, dreariest, strangest of all. She was in Paris, the city which the strange lady had declared to be the only city in the world worth living in.

This was Lily's Paris:

To rise before it was light in winter-time. To be mewed up till breakfast in the dark school-room, nine-tenths of whose area were icy chill, and the tenth red-hot from the dead baking lowering presence of the stove. To brood over lessons, lessons, lessons, from half an hour after eight until twelve, then to crowd into the refectory for the second breakfast. Then (if haply she were not under punishment) to wander into the playground till two. Then to fag at lessons, lessons again, till five. Then, once more to flock into the refectory to dinner. Then after another hour's wandering in the playground, if it were fine, or cowering in the schoolroom if it were wet, to go through an hour's hideous torture until bedtime—a torture which was called "the study hour"—a time when the girls were supposed to be meditating over the tasks of the day which had just passed, and speculating over those of the morrow which was to come—a time when neither books, nor papers, nor slates were allowed; but when absolute and immovable silence was enjoined, and the movement of a hand, the shuffling of a foot, the turning of a head, was punished by bad marks—when a cough was penal, and a sneeze intolerable—when if a girl, rendered desperate by this excruciating command to be mute, would sometimes break silence coûte que coûte—ask some irrelevant question, make some incoherent remark—she would be sentenced to "hold her tongue" for a quarter of an hour—to hold it literally, taking the offending member between her thumb and fore-finger, and striving to retain her hold upon it with the most ludicrously lamentable results of slipperiness—when, if another girl, as would often happen, dropped off to sleep, she would be doomed to stand on one leg for five minutes, and so, in drowsiness that was not to be subdued, would doze off again, and stagger, and come at last to the ground,—to be, to do, and to suffer all these things were among Lily's first experiences of the only city in the world worth living in.

She was miserable, and she had cause to be miserable. The governesses did not so much dislike as they contemned her. It was put about publicly by Mademoiselle Espréménil, as upon authority from the chief, Marcassin, that Pauline, or "la petite Anglaise," was poor, and all but friendless; that she was being "elevated" almost through charity; and that the sphere in which she now moved was much superior to that to which she had been hitherto accustomed. Lily could not disprove these malignant inuendoes. She could not but admit the probability of the schoolmistress knowing a great deal more about her than she knew about herself. So she let them have their way, and suffered in silence. Her schoolmates were not slow to take up the cue dropped by their instructresses. None of the big girls petted her. There were no rich girls in the school. The elder pupils were mostly in training to be governesses, and toiled too hard to find time for petting any one. If wealth engender laziness, it is not unkindly to the cultivation of tender-heartedness. A rich old maid not over pious, is about the pleasantest and most generous soul alive. 'Tis poverty, griping galling grinding poverty, that makes spinsters harsh and sour.

Children are often apt to be pitiless. They have not felt enough pain themselves to compassionate its endurance by others, and they are frequently eager to inflict agony, of the scope and purport whereof they are ignorant. Lily had scant mercy shown her. At first her companions took to pinching her, pulling her hair, treading on her feet, and administering chiquenaudes, or fillips with the thumb and finger, on her cheeks. She bore with these for a time, but at last her temper and her English spirit got the better of her, and she bestowed so sounding a slap on the back of the biggest of her tormentors, that the rest retreated, like a herd of frightened fawns, to a remote corner of the playground, crying out that "la petite Anglaise" was dangerous. French children are proficient in the minute details of bodily torture, but they do not understand baculine arguments of the broader kind. French girls don't slap, French boys don't fight with one another, and French children are never beaten by their instructors. Jean Jacques Rousseau and the French Revolution definitively banished stripes and blows from the educational curriculum of Gaul.

So being somewhat wary respecting overt acts of violence towards the "petite Anglaise," her schoolmates shunned her. She was left alone with her tasks, and her wretchedness, and herself. But for a natural sweetness of mind and gentleness of nature with which the poor child had been gifted by Heaven, she might have grown up sullen, morose, and selfish. There would have been a hundred excuses for her learning to hate her species in general, and school-girls and governesses in particular. But it was mercifully decreed otherwise, for Lily was made for love. She found, indeed, that those among whom her lot was cast would not, through disdain and prejudice, love her; but she was saved, through her own innate suavity of soul, from falling into the other and perilous extreme of loving herself. Still, she found it necessary to have something to love. There were no dogs or cats about the place to fix her affections upon. Rabbits, squirrels, white mice, silkworms even—all the ordinary domestic menagerie of children—were prohibited in the Pension Marcassin. She was too old to make friends with spiders, with the rapid lizards, with the beetles of sheeny armour. No sparrows ever came into the playground. Small birds are rare in Paris. So, in default of something tangible to love she elected to build up a world of her own, and to people it with creatures of her own imagination, and to dwell among them, and love them very dearly. Her world was totally at war with Mercator's projection. It was a very puerile Utopia, the most frivolous of Formosas, a highly babyish New Atlantis—a silly nonsensical world, if you like; but she believed firmly in it, and her devotion to its inhabitants was unbounded. If she were punished, somebody in the Ideal World came to comfort her, and to show her a clue to work her way out of the labyrinth of a tangled task. If she were unhappy, she was invited to festivals and pic-nics in the Imaginary Land. There she daneed; there she sang; there she went to the play; there she romped and skipped; and there, I am afraid, she often went to the water-side to dine on beautiful dishes of fish. But there was no noisy company there; and the strange haughty lady was not one of her company. Only she and the tall gentleman sat at the table, and afterwards went into the balcony to gaze upon the ships, and the long line of the Essex shore, till the sun went down, and it was dark, and the lamps began to glimmer. Silly Lily.

In this great school she was the only captive thus rigorously confined. The other girls went out on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons for long walks. On their return they told her superciliously about the Elysian Fields and the Wood of Boulogne, about the Garden of Plants and the Museum of the Louvre. At Easter they talked of masked balls to which their brothers went, of débardeurs and Pierrots, of the mad revelry of the carnival, of the fat ox promenading the Boulevards and Hercules leading him, while carriages full of gaily-attired maskers followed the bedizened beast. These joys were not for Lily. She was to be kept under, and in.

Only one thing was wanting to complete her wretchedness, and that came at last. Madame seldom spoke to her alone. When she made her periodical tours of inspection through the classrooms, Lily incurred an augmented share of reproof and bad marks at her hands; but she was seldom summoned to the presence of the Marcassin. It happened, however, one afternoon, in the fifth year of residence, that she was commanded to repair to Madame's cabinet.

The "cabinet" was a square comfortless apartment, not unlike a refrigerator in its chilly atmosphere and light wooden fittings. The Marcassin was the ice in the refrigerator, and froze all who approached her. In the "cabinet" she collated the register of the young ladies' studies and conducts, and made disparaging marginal notes thereon. At her tall desk in the "cabinet" she drew up the alarming "memoirs," or half-yearly bills of the pupils. To the "cabinet," offenders of more than ordinary turpitude were doomed to repair, to undergo the anguish of prolonged and solemn reprimand. Finally, to the cold grey and white papered wall of this cabinet was affixed an enormous framed and glazed pancarte of pasteboard, bearing, in elaborate French engrossing, and with many flourishes, in which the forms of swans, eagles, and griffins preponderated, the names of the pupils of the establishment who had distinguished themselves from six months to six months by assiduity in study, or propriety of conduct. This placard was called the "Tableau d'Honneur." It was renewed at the commencement of every fresh half-year; and a rumour ran through the Pension Marcassin that M. Lestiboudois, the writing-master, received no less a sum than one hundred francs for executing it in ornamental caligraphy.

Lily stood, her hands meekly folded, her head decorously bent, her feet well set together—"position de recueillement humble et attentive," as it was set forth in the codex of disciplinary etiquette observed in the pension—before her instructress. She was mentally wondering of what misdeed she could have rendered herself guilty during the past week to merit a summons to the refrigerating cabinet.

"Fille Floris, called Pauline," said the Marcassin, sternly, and no longer deigning to give Lily a title of courtesy, "you and I must have some conversation together. The affairs have been going on too long in a deregulated manner. They must be regulated now, in a manner definitive. Do you hear me, Fille Floris?"

She spoke in French now, and Lily understood her well. The girl could speak the lively language fluently—so fluently, that she sometimes found herself thinking or addressing the people of the Imaginary Empire in French, and as often discovered her tongue tripping and stumbling when she essayed to sing some little English rhyme of old times.

The Marcassin slowly unlocked one of the drawers in her tall bureau, and took forth two packets of neatly folded papers. One packet was slim and sparse, the other dense and heavy.

"Do you see this, Fille Floris?" she resumed, in a cold and bitter tone, pointing to the slim packet. "One, two, three, four, half-years' memoirs, bills for your pension and education, and which have been duly paid by the persons who placed you here. And now observe." She untied the other packet, undoing with a vengeful wrench of her teeth an obstinate knot in the string which confined it. "One, two, three, four, five, six—three years' memoirs—nearly three thousand francs for your pension and education; and not one centime of those three thousand francs have been paid. Do you hear me?"

Lily heard, and turned white as her name.

"Three years, then," pursued the pitiless Marcassin, "you have been eating bread and drinking wine to which you have no right. Three years you have been living on my charity. Pale, impertinent, worthless, insubordinate" — poor Lily!—"you have always been; and I have been often obliged to tell you so; but not till this moment have I informed you that you are a pauper and a beggar. Who are the robbers and felons who have left you here to impose on my credulity, and fatten on the fruit of my industry? Speak, little impostor."

"Oh, madame, madame!" the girl urged, tearfully, "I'm not an impostor. It is not my fault. Madame knows much more than I do of the persons who brought me here. I was such a little girl then. I have always done my best, and tried to learn, and to be good. Oh! don't reproach me with what I am innocent of; for I am quite, quite, alone."

"Insolent!" retorted the Marcassin. "You will reason, will you? Ah! it is I who will bring you to reason. Tell me instantly the names of the swindlers who owe me three thousand francs."

"Indeed I don't know, madame. How can I tell? From the day I was brought here, I have never had a single letter, a single visitor, a single friend, except that dear Mademoiselle Marygold, who is gone."

"You dare to mention the name of that rebellious and ungrateful girl to me?" interrupted the schoolmistress, with a furious look. "Allons! It is of a piece with your other impertinence."

Lily could only sob and wring her hands in reply.

"The very clothes you have on your back have been paid for or renewed by me these two years past. You are a burden, a pest, an incumbrance to the school. It is by fraud that you have learnt the piano, the dance. You have robbed me of lessons in drawing and geography. Why do I not give you up to the police for the escroquerie of your parents—if you have any parents—little miserable, who ought to have been put into the crèche of the Enfants Trouvés? Why do I not send you to the Dépôt of Mendicity? Tell me, little beggar brat!"

In a bodily as well as a mental rage at last, which was strange with this frigid woman, she rose and seized Lily by the shoulders and shook her. The terrified girl fled into a corner of the room, too much alarmed to shriek, but trembling and holding her hands before her face.

Mademoiselle Marcassin resumed her self-possession. She was a coldly logical lady, and

recognised the inexpediency of a personal conflict with a pensionnaire whose only fault was that her friends had neglected to pay her half-yearly bills. Besides, she knew that the charges she brought against the girl of being "idle, impertinent, worthless, and insubordinate," were groundless. There were few girls in the school more studious than Lily, and there was not one better conducted.

She sat down at her bureau again, replaced the packets in the drawer, and locked it. "A truce to these absurdities," she said. "No harm has been done you. Let us have no more whimpering, or we will see what effect the atmosphere of the wood-cellar—la cave au bois—and two days' bread-and-water will have upon you. Come forward, and stand in front of this bureau, and listen to me."

Lily came forward as she was commanded. She hastily dried her eyes, and stood before the Marcassin, pale, but composed.

"People who eat bread must earn it," remarked the schoolmistress. "Don't think I am going to keep you—pour vos beaux yeux—for your own sweet sake. If you continue to live here, you must work. Are you ready to work?"

"Yes, madame, as hard as ever you wish me."

"We shall see. If I sent you away from here, your destination would be the Préfecture de Police. You have no domicile, no papers, no name even that offers reasonable proof of identity, and I question whether the consul of your nation would be at the trouble of reclaiming you. The woman who brought you here—I wish I could catch sight of her, la vaurienne!—spoke English, but she was French. She told me you had been born in France. Thus, all the police could do for you would be to send you to a house of correction—a penitentiary, understand me well—where you would be confined till you were twenty-one years of age, where you would be kept all day, either kneeling on the cold stones singing psalms, or working your fingers to the bone with needlework, under the tutelage of the good grey sisters who have little machines and leathern thongs to keep their correctionnaires in order."

Lily's heart sank within her. She had heard appalling stories of the severities practised in the Maisons de Correction—stories which, in justice to the good nuns who conduct those establishments, must be branded as apocryphal. Could they be worse stories than Lily might tell of the Pension Marcassin?

"You may remain here," continued the Marcassin. "But on a different footing. You are no longer a pensionnaire, but a fille de classe. You will do what you are told, and learn what you are permitted, and will make yourself as useful as common gratitude for being fed, lodged, and clothed should render you. We will say nothing of the arrears for your board and education. If I cannot discover the swindlers who have cozened me out of my money you and I will have some future conversation on the matter. Now you may go."

CAREFULLY MOVED IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

If any reader of this periodical should require full and valuable information regarding the houses in the various suburbs of London, their size, rent, advantages and disadvantages, annual amount of sewer's rate and land tax, soil, climate, quality of water, and other particulars, let him address a letter, post-paid, to "Wanderer," under cover to the Conductor, and he will have his heart's desire. I am "Wanderer," if you please, and I am in a position to give the information named; for, during the last ten years, I have led a nomadic and peripatetic existence: now becoming the tenant of a villa here, now blossoming as the denizen of a mansion there, sipping the sweets of the assessed taxes and the parochial rates, and then flying off with my furniture in several large vans to a distant neighbourhood. Want of money, possession of funds, hatred of town, detestation of the country, a cheerful misanthropy, and an unpleasant gregariousness, all these have, one by one, acted upon me, and made me their slave. What I have learned by sad experience, I now purpose to teach: setting myself up as a pillar of example and warning to my dissatisfied fellow-creatures.

Before I married, I lived in chambers in Piccadilly, kept my horse, belonged to the Brummel Club, and was looked upon as rather a fine fellow; but when I married, my Uncle Snape (from whom I obtained the supplies for my expenses and who was a confirmed woman-hater) at once stopped my allowance, and I had nothing but my professional earnings as an Old Bailey barrister, and a hundred a year, which I had inherited. Under these circumstances I had intended going into lodgings; but my wife's family (I don't know exactly what that means: she has no mother, and her father never interferes with her or her sisters: I think it must be her sisters who are the family, but we always speak of "the family") were very genteel, and looked upon lodgings as low; so it was generally understood that I must take a house, and that "the family" would help to furnish it. I need not mention that there was a great discussion as to where the house should be. The family lived in St. John's Wood, and wished us to be near them; but the rents in that saintly neighbourhood were beyond my means, and, after a great deal of searching and heart-aching worry, after inspecting a dozen "exact things," "just what you wanted," and "such treasures!" found for me by friends, none of which would do, I at last took a house in Bass's-buildings, in the New-road. That great thoroughfare has since been sub-divided, I think, but then it was the New-road stretching from Paddington to Islington, and our house was about a mile from

the Paddington end. It was small, but so was the rent, sixty pounds a year, and it was quite large enough for my wife and me and our one servant. It had a little garden in front, between it and the road, with a straight line of flagstones leading direct from the gate to the door-steps, and bits of flower-beds (in which nothing ever grew) intersected by little gravel paths about a foot wide. This garden was a source of great delight to my humorous friends. One of them could be seen carefully putting one foot before the other, in order that he might not step off the path, and, after wandering in and out between the little beds, would feign excessive fatigue on his arrival at the house, declaring he had been "lost in the shrubbery;" another would suggest that we should have a guide on the spot to show visitors the nearest way; while a third hoped we intended giving some out-door fêtes in the summer, assuring us that the "band of the Life Guards would look splendid on that," pointing to a bit of turf about the size of a pocket-handkerchief. When the street door was opened wide back, it entirely absorbed the hall, and we could not get out of the dining-room door; but then we could, of course, always pass out through the "study," a little room like a cistern, which just held my desk and one chair.

There was a very small yard at the back, giving on to a set of stables which had their real entrance in the mews; but we were compelled to cover all our back windows with putty imitative of ground glass, on which we stuck cut-out paper designs of birds and flowers, as these looked directly on the rooms over the stables, inhabited by the coachman and his family; and the sight of a stalwart man at the opposite window, shaving himself in very dingy shirt-sleeves within a few feet of your nose, was not considered genteel by The Family. We were rather stivy in the up-stairs rooms, owing to low ceilings, and a diffidence we felt as to opening the windows, for the New Road is a dusty thoroughfare, and the immediate vicinity of a cab-stand, though handy on some occasions, lets one into rather a larger knowledge of the stock of expletives with which the English language abounds, than is good for refined ears. But when we knew that the coachman was out, we used to open the back windows and grow very enthusiastic over "the fresh air from Hampstead and Highgate," which, nevertheless, always seemed to me to have a somewhat stabley twang. One great point with The Family was that there were no shops near us: that being an acme of vulgarity which, it appears, no well-regulated mind can put up with; to be sure, the row immediately opposite to us was bounded by a chemist's, but then, you know, a chemist can scarcely be called a tradesman—at least The Family thought so—and his coloured bottles were rather a relief to the eye than otherwise, giving one, at night, a strange idea of being at sea in view of land. On the door next to the chemist's, stood, when we first took possession of our house in Bass's-buildings, a brass plate with "Middlemiss, Portrait Artist," on it, and by its side a little case containing miniatures of *the* officer, *the* student in cap and gown, and *the* divine in white bands, with the top of the wooden pulpit growing out from under his arms, which are common to such professors. It was a thoroughly harmless little art-studio, and apparently did very little business, no one ever being seen to enter its portal. But after a twelvemonth Mr. Middlemiss died, and we heard through the electric chain of our common butcher, that his son, a youth of great spirit, was about to carry on the business. The butcher was right. The new proprietor was a youth of great spirit, no half measures with him; he certainly did not fear his fate too much, nor were his deserts small (though in his lamented father's time his dinners were said to have been restricted), for he set his fate upon one touch—of paint—to win or lose it all. He coloured the entire house a bright vermilion, on which, from attic to basement, the following sentences were displayed in deep black letters. "The Shop for Portraits! Stop, Examine, and Judge for Yourselves! 'Sit, Cousin Percy, sit, good Cousin Hotspur'—Shakespeare! Photography Defied! Your Likeness in Oils in Ten Minutes! 'The Counterfeit Presentment'—Shakespeare. Charge low, Portraits lasting! Art, not Mechanical *Labour!*" Kit-cat portraits of celebrated characters copied from photographs leered out of every window, while the drawing-room balcony was given up to Lord John Russell waving a parchment truncheon, and Mr. Sturgeon, the popular preacher, squinting at his upheld forefinger. The Family were out of town when this horrible work was undertaken: when they returned, they declared with one voice that we could live in Bass's-buildings no longer, and must move at once.

I was not sorry, though I liked the little house well enough, but we had been confined there, in more senses than one, and wanted more room for our family, now increased by a baby and a nurse. The nurse was a low-spirited young person afflicted with what she called "the creeps," under the influence of which she used to rock to and fro, and moan dismally and slap the baby on the back; and it was thought that change of scene might do her good. I was glad, too, for another reason. I had recently obtained occasional employment on a daily journal, which detained me until late at night at the newspaper office, and I had frequently to attend night consultations at the chambers of leading barristers, to whom I was to act as junior. Bass's-buildings were a horrible distance from the newspaper office and the chambers; and walking home at night had several times knocked me up. So my wife submitted to The Family, a proposition that I must remove to some more convenient position; and The Family, after a struggle (based, I am inclined to think, on the reflection that lunch at my expense would not be so practicable), consented.

The neighbourhood of Russell-square was that

selected, and in it we began to make constant research. There are few Londoners of the rising generation who know those ghastly streets, solemn and straight, where the daylight at the height of summer fades at four o'clock, and in winter only looks in for an hour about noon; where the houses, uniform in dirt and dinginess, in lack of paint on their window-sills, and in fulness of filth on their windows, stare confronting each other in twin-like similitude. Decorum-street, Hessian-street, Walcheren-square, Great Dettingen-street, each exactly resembling the other, all equally dreary, equally deserted, equally heart-breaking, equally genteel. Even the family could not deny the gentility, but were good enough to remember having visited a judge in Culloden-terrace, and having been at the routs of Lady Flack, wife of Sir Nicholas Flack, Baronet, Head of the College of Physicians, and Body-preserver in Ordinary to the great Georgius of sainted memory. All the districts just named were a little above my means, but eventually I settled down into a house in Great Dowdy-street, a row of small but very eligible tenements on the Dowdy estate. None of your common thoroughfares, to be rattled through by vulgar cabs and earth-shaking Pickford's vans, but a self-included property with a gate at each end and a lodge with a porter in a gold laced hat and the Dowdy arms on the buttons of his mulberry-coloured coat, to prevent any one, except with a mission to one of the houses, from intruding on the exclusive territory. The rent was seventy pounds a year, "on a repairing lease" (which means an annual outlay of from five-and-twenty to thirty to keep the bricks and mortar and timbers together), and the accommodation consisted of a narrow dining-room painted salmon colour, and a little back room looking out upon a square black enclosure in which grew fearful fungi; two big drawing-rooms, the carpeting of which nearly swallowed a quarter's income; two good bedrooms, and three attics. I never went into the basement save when I visited the cellar, which was a mouldy vault under the street pavement only accessible through the area, and consequently rendering any one going to it liable to the insults of rude boys, who would grin through the area-railings, and say, "Give us a drop, guv'nor;" or, "Mind you don't drop the bottle, old 'un;" and other ribald remarks—but I believe the kitchen was pronounced by the servants to be "stuffy," and the whole place "ill conwenient," there being no larder, pantry, nor the usual domestic arrangements. I know, too, that we were supposed to breed and preserve a very magnificent specimen of the black-beetle, insects which migrated to different parts of the house in droves, and which, to the number of five-and-twenty being met slowly ascending the drawing-room stairs, caused my wife to swoon, and me to invest money in a hedgehog: an animal that took up his abode in the coal-cellar on the top of the coals, and, retiring thither early one morning after a surfeit of beetles, was supposed to have been inadvertently "laid" in the fire by the cook in mistake for a lump of Wallsend.

I don't think there were many advantages in the Great Dowdy-street house (though I was very happy there, and had an immense amount of fun and pleasure) beyond the proximity to my work, and the consequent saving in cab hire and fatigue. But I do recollect the drawbacks; and although six years have elapsed since I experienced them, they are constantly rising in my mind. I remember our being unable ever to open any window without an immediate inroad of "blacks:" triturate soot of the most penetrating kind, which at once made piebald all the anti-macassars, toilet-covers, counterpanes, towels, and other linen; I remember our being unable to get any sleep after five A.M., when, at the builder's which abutted on our black enclosure, a tremendous bell clanged, summoning the workmen to labour, and from which time there was such a noise of sawing, and hammering, and planing, and filing, and tool grinding, and bellows blowing, interspersed with strange bellowings in the Celtic tongue from one Irish labourer to another, and mingled with objurgations in pure Saxon from irate overseers, that one might as well have attempted a quiet nap in the neighbourhood of Babel when the tower was in course of erection. I remember, on the first occasion of our sleeping there, a horrible yell echoing through the house, and being discovered to proceed from the nurse aforenamed, who had, at the time of her shrieking, about six A.M., heard "ghostes a burstin' in through the walls." We calmed her perturbed spirit, finding no traces of any such inroads, but were aroused in a similar manner the next morning, and then discovered that the rushing in of the New River supply, obedient to the turncock's key, was the source of the young person's fright. I remember the hot summer Sunday afternoons, when the pavement would be red-hot, and the dust, and bits of straw, and scraps of paper would blow fitfully about with every little puff of air, and the always dull houses would look infinitely duller with their blinds down, and no sound would fall upon the ear save the distant hum of the cabs in Holborn, or the footfall of some young person in service going to afternoon church—or to what was, in her mind, its equivalent—in all the glory of open-worked stockings, low shoes, and a prayer-book swaddled in a white cotton pocket-handkerchief. I have sat at my window on scores of such Sundays, eyeing the nose of Lazarus over the dwarf Venetian blinds opposite, or the gorgeous waistcoat of Eliason, a little higher up (for the tribes are great in the neighbourhood). I have stared upward to catch a glimpse of the scrap of blue unclouded sky, visible above the houses; and then I have thought of Richmond Hill; of snowy tablecloths, and cool Moselle-cup, and salmon cutlets, in a room overhanging the river at the Orkney Arms, at Maidenhead; of that sea breeze which passes the little hotel at Freshwater Bay, in wild hurry to make play over the neighbouring downs; of shaded walks, and

cool retreats, and lime avenues, and overhung bathing-places, and all other things delicious at that season; until I have nearly gone mad with hatred of Great Dowdy-street, and fancied myself pretty able to comprehend the feelings of the Polar bears in their dull retrogressive promenade in the Zoological Gardens. That none of our friends had ever heard of Great Dowdy-street; that no cabman could be instructed as to its exact whereabout, naming it generally as "somewhere near the Fondlin';" that migration to a friend's house in a habitable region to dinner occasioned an enormous expense in cab fare; that all the tradesmen with whom we had previously dealt declined our custom, "as they never sent that way;" that we found Tottenham-court-road a line of demarcation, behind which we left light, and sunshine, and humanity—on our side of which we tumbled into darkness and savagery; that we were in the midst of a Hansom cab colony, clattering home at all hours of the night; and in the immediate neighbourhood of all the organ men, who gave us their final grind just before midnight; all these were minor but irritating annoyances. At length, after six years' experience of this life, we heard that Uncle Snape was dead and had left me some money, and we immediately determined on quitting Great Dowdy-street.

"Oh! my life in Egypt!" sighs Cleopatra, in the Dream of Fair Women, remembering the dalliance and the wit, the Libyan banquets, and all the delights of that brief but glorious season. "Oh! my life in Agatha Villa, Old Brompton!" say I, which was quite as brief, and almost as glorious. We entered upon Agatha Villa immediately on quitting Great Dowdy-street, and revelled in the contrast. Such an elegant house, such a dining-room in red flock paper and black oak furniture, such a drawing-room in satin paper and chintz, opening with large French windows upon a little lawn, such a study for me, such a spare bedroom for a bachelor friend from Saturday till Monday! It was at Agatha Villa that we commenced our delightful little Sunday dinners—which indeed finished in the same place. It was at Agatha Villa we first discovered how fond people were of us, what a popular writer I was, how my oratorical displays at the Old Bailey were making a sensation. People liked coming to see us at Agatha Villa: not for the mere sake of what they got, of course, but because they were sure of meeting "such charming people" at our house: money was all very well, they would remark, but no money could bring together such a host of genius as was always to be seen at Agatha Villa. The host of genius (I'm not speaking of myself) was expensive to entertain; it stopped late, it dined heavily, it smoked on the lawn, and remained sipping cold drinks until past midnight. Its admirers remained too: sometimes some of the host of genius borrowed money and didn't return it; the host of genius was always either painting a picture which I was expected to buy, or giving a concert which we were expected to patronise, or having a "ben" for which we had to take stalls. From one of the admirers of the host of genius, I bought a pair of horses; they were not good horses; from another I purchased a phaeton, it *was* a bad one! I confess I did not like the manner in which some of the host of genius used to climb up the walls and kiss their hands to Miss Crump's young ladies who were walking in the next garden, and I owned to Miss Crump that it was too strong retaliation even for the pianoforte practice at 5 A.M.; they could not take any liberties with my neighbour on the other side, for he was Dr. Winks, the celebrated mad-doctor, and we were always in a state of mental terror lest some of his patients should get loose and come over the wall at us. However, the life at Agatha Villa, though merry, was brief. Through my own exertions, and those of the host of genius, I ran through a couple of thousand pounds in two years, and then the Cotopaxi Grand Imperial Mining Company, in which I had invested the rest of Uncle Snape's money, went to smash, and I had to give up Agatha Villa.

The thought of having to return to London and its dreariness, in the summer which had just set in, was the bitterest morsel of that tart of humility which we were about to partake of; and you may judge, therefore, with what delight I received an offer of a country-house, rent free, for a year. "It's a capital old house, any way," said old Cutler, its owner, "a capital house, near town, and yet thoroughly in the country. I'm going to take my gal abroad for a year to see the Continent, and you're not only welcome to live at Wollops, but I shall be obliged to you for keeping the place aired." Now, Wollops *was* a house, if you like! An old red-brick Queen Anne mansion, with little deep mullioned diamond-paned windows, with quaint old armour in the hall, and a portrait of Brabazon de Wollop, temp. Charles the Second, over the chimney-piece; there were long passages, and tapestry-hung rooms, and oak corridors, and secret doors, and a wine-cellar so like a subterraneous dungeon, that my heart sunk within me every time I entered it; there were likewise numerous bedrooms with tremendous bedsteads all plumes and hangings; and a stone kitchen like that one in the Tower of London which Mr. Cruikshank drew. The house stood in the middle of splendid grounds, there was a carriage-drive up to it, its drawing and dining room windows looked out upon a beautiful lawn dotted here and there with brilliant beds of verbena and scarlet geranium; and there was a lake, and a kitchen-garden, and an orchard, all kept up at Mr. Cutler's expense; and everything was so noble and so grand, that a friend, who knew the reason of our quitting Agatha Villa, remarked, on seeing Wollops, that one more attempt at retrenchment would take us into Buckingham Palace. From our windows we looked away over green fields, to Harrow on the one side, to Highgate on the other, and it was worth something when coming

From brawling courts
And dusty purlieus of the law,

to feel your feet on the turf, with the sweet fresh air blowing round you, and that soft silence, broken only by the pipe of bird or hum of insect, which is the greatest of all rural charms to an overworked Londoner. Wollops was too far for the host of genius, as they could not have got back at night, so we only had our own friends and The Family. I am happy to say that the croquet parties at Wollops were the cause of marrying off my wife's two younger sisters: one to a revising barrister, and the other to a county court judge: while the elder girls, who had been very uncivil about what they called the "goings on" at Agatha Villa, were so delighted with Wollops that they forgave us off hand, and each came and stayed a month. All this was during the summer weather; the autumn of that year was as good as summer, warm, clear, and sunny, and we were thoroughly happy. But, one fatal morning in the middle of November we got up and found winter had arrived; the wind roared through the old house, and moaned and shrieked in the long corridors; the rain dashed against the badly fitting romantic windows, and lodged in large pools on their inner sills; the water-pipe along the house was choked, overflowed, soaked through the old red brick, which was just like sponge, and, coming through the drawing-room wall, spoilt my proof copy of Landseer's Titania. The big bare trees outside, rattled and clashed their huge arms, the gardeners removed everything from the beds, the turf grew into rank grass, and the storms from Harrow to Highgate were awful in their intensity. Inside the house, the fires would not light for some time, and then the chimneys smoked awfully, and the big grates consumed scuttles of coals and huge logs of wood without giving out the smallest heat. The big hall was like a well; after dark the children were afraid to go about the passages; and the servants came in a body and resigned, on account of the damp of the stone kitchen. Gradually the damp penetrated everywhere; lucifers would not strike, a furry growth came upon the looking-glass, the leather chairs all stuck to us when we attempted to rise. My wife wanted us to leave Wollops, but I was firm—for two nights afterwards; then the rats, disturbed by the rains from their usual holes, rushed into our bedroom and danced wildly over us. The next morning at six A.M. I despatched the gardener to town, to bring out three cabs, and removed my family in those vehicles to lodgings in Cockspur-street, where I am at present.

THE BLOSSOMING TIME.

THE violets, in bunches of purple,
Bloom sweet on the bosom of Spring;
The thrushes, up high on the larches,
Of summer, of summer-time sing.
The primroses light the green shadows
Of fir woods, odorous, dim;
And deep in the darkest of coverts
The nightingale chanteth his hymn.

That's at dusk; but I speak of the morning,
When sunbeams glance into the wood,
And lay in long passages, golden,
Like paths for the spirits of good.
The thrushes are singing in chorus,
The blackbird outwhistles them all;
Up there on the aspen he carols—
The aspen so light and so tall.

The squirrels sport up in the beeches,
The bees on the furze-blossom sleep,
The lark o'er the green corn and clover,
The ricks and the close huddled sheep,
Soars, soars, and in ecstasy singing,
Bears upward his prayer unto Heaven:
He's the priest of the blue upper region,
Nor rests he a day in the seven.

'Tis a time full of hope and of promise,
This youth of the blossoming year,
All is pleasure on earth and in ether,
No clouding of sorrow nor fear.
There is love singing loud from the branches,
There is love in each wavering flower,
Yes, love in each blade of the barley,
That steals to the light every hour.

SHAKESPEARE-MAD.

I FEEL now, at this cool and collected moment, that for a whole week I have been going about with straws in my hair—a raving maniac. Here are the straws lying before me in a tangled wisp: a pewter medal, with an effigy in profile of the Immortal Bard on one side, and a front elevation view of his birthplace on the other; item, a triple badge in Coventry ribbon with the Bard's lineaments in floss silk, and woven representations of natal spot, and church containing dust; item, button with rosy-cheeked miniature of the Bard in enamel; item, blue scarf with full length Bard in an impossible but traditional attitude, pointedly calling attention to a scroll inscribed with a passage from his own works, of which, I am led to infer, he was particularly proud.

Now, considering that for six days I have been rushing about in a frantic state of excitement with all these straws in my hair, I take it as highly generous on the part of my relatives that they have abstained from procuring the certificate of two qualified medical practitioners, and locking me up in Bedlam. When the mania seized upon me, I resolved to do two things which the Bard himself, in his profound philosophy, never could have dreamt of. I resolved to assist at the planting of a tree in London, and to be present at a display of fireworks in Stratford-upon-Avon, on one and the same day. I carried my resolve into execution. I was on Primrose-hill at three o'clock, and I was on the bridge at Stratford-upon-Avon at nine. But I had entered upon my mad career before this.

At the witching hour of the previous night, when the last stroke of twelve ushered in the natal day, I betook myself to a famous hostelrie to sup in the Bard's honour, in the exclusive company of the living illustrators of his works. I will not attempt to conceal that I was drawn thither, not altogether by reverence for the

Bard, but, in some degree, by the expectation that certain of his illustrators would probably appear in the full evening costume of velvet tunics and russet boots with spurs. It was whispered that, on the transpontine shore, russet boots and spurs were considered the correct thing on such high festive occasions. Let me silence whispering malice, and give the transpontine illustrators their due. If there were any there more spotless as to shirt fronts, more resplendent as to the polish of their patent leather boots, more completely en règle as to the dimensions of their white cravats, more fashionable as to the cut of their black dress-coats and pantaloons, more snowy as to the hue of their cambric handkerchiefs, than others, they were the illustrators from over the water. I will even go so far as to say that, as regards the oiliness of their hair, and the number of plaits on their shirt-fronts, they put the illustrators of the West End to shame and confusion. When I found myself in their midst crushing up the broad stairs of the hostel, all classes and degrees mingling on equal terms of brotherhood in honour of the great High Priest of their art, it occurred to me that I was not doing such a very mad thing after all. Up they went, a strangely amalgamated crowd of leading tragedians and comedians, rubbing shoulders and exchanging friendly greetings with general utility, and supernumeraries, and pantomimists, and prompters, and call-boys, and even door-keepers. Ah, surely he was a Great Magician, whose name, after three centuries, could work such a charm. It was good for the heart to see such community of feeling, and curious to mark how unaccustomed they all were to the use of tickets of admission. None of them had their tickets ready, and when they were demanded by the man at the top of the stairs, the illustrators seemed to regard it as quite a joke that *they* should be asked for tickets, as if they were the public. When they were all seated, the great hall was, as an illustrator in the eccentric line observed, "gorged with talent," which evoked from another the remark that it would be a fine thing for the country actors, longing for London, if the floor were to give way and entomb the lot. Happily, however, no such combination of good and bad luck occurred; though the enthusiasm at times was well calculated to inspire fears for the security of the roof. The unveiling of the statue of the Bard at the beginning of the feast, acted like a spark of fire upon a heap of gunpowder. The illustrators sprang to their feet and went off in one tremendous bang of applause. Yet there could scarcely have been twenty persons in that room who had much to be thankful to the Bard for. For four or five whom he had blessed with Macbeth, there were a hundred whom he had condemned to the carrying of banners. I had the pleasure of sitting beside a banner-bearer, one who had nailed his colours to the flagstaff in early life, and was resolved to stand by them to the last, and he was as enthusiastic as—nay, more enthusiastic than Macbeth, who, I am bound to say, devoted himself very closely to his supper, and took it coolly.

The name of Shakespeare, mention of the Player's Art, the Stage, were all so many sparks of fire falling upon gunpowder which never burned out, but always renewed itself from its own ashes and smoke to go off again and again with an explosion which shook the walls, and caused their Royal Highnesses the Dukes of Kent and Sussex to tremble in their gilt frames. So much enthusiasm and so much unity of feeling were probably never witnessed in any similar gathering. Nothing but Shakespeare's wand could have ruled such an ocean, ordinarily agitated by so many diverse currents and disturbed by so many opposing winds. All jealousies and disappointments were laid aside for the time, and one feeling animated and controlled the vast assembly. Notwithstanding a little noisy disagreement—not about Shakespeare—which took place between two perfervid youths at the end of the room, this gathering of actors in honour of the great master of the dramatic art was, in its broad and general aspect, a most impressive spectacle. I, who had come with a strong predisposition to be amused, rather than impressed, was fain to confess this much. I could not think of any other class that would have been so unanimous and so hearty in an act of homage to a chief. And so, when they had lingered to the last, loth to tear themselves away from a scene of such rare enjoyment, in the bright sunshine on the morning of Shakespeare's three hundredth birthday, the players streamed out into the street, while citizens, awakened possibly from dreams of last night's play, peered at them from the corners of blinds, and utterly failed to recognise Falstaff in the respectable cleanly gentleman gaily jumping into a Hansom cab; or Bardolph in the smart young man with the embroidered shirt-front; or King Henry the Fourth in the tall gentleman in the black surtout, borrowing a light for his cigar from Francis, the drawer, in all the magnificence of a white hat resplendent in the morning sun.

Surely I am mad now, for I go away in a four-wheeled cab in company with Hamlet Prince of Denmark, and Horatio his friend, and the First Gravedigger, who has only one waistcoat on, and that bound with gold braid, and the Ghost of Hamlet's father outside on the box, scenting the morning air with a briar-root pipe, away to north-western regions, where early shop-keeping birds are taking down their shutters, and preparing to catch the first human worm that appears above ground—away in the fresh morning air, until we begin to persuade ourselves that we are not tired, and that there is no necessity to go to bed.

We do not go to bed, but joyfully accept an invitation to breakfast with First Gravedigger, whose pressing hospitality at that awkward hour in the morning is an astonishment to us all, until he informs us that the partner of his bosom is out of town; which fully accounted, I will not say for the

milk in the cocoa-nut, but for the coffee with boiling milk, accompanied by hot rolls and a cold capon—I will not say fowl in this connexion—with which we were presently refreshed. Passed several hours in a ridiculous attempt to be lively and wide awake, and just giving it up and sinking into the arms of Morpheus and an easy-chair, when the Ghost of Hamlet's Father, who is used to late hours, cries out, "More Shakespeare!" and we all start to our feet, and find, on consulting the dials in our pokes, that it is time to hie us to the Oak. So away we go through the gate, and past a cluster of genteel villas, to the base of the mountain, whereon a number of flying merchants and perambulating speculators have seized the occasion to revive the glories of Chalk Farm fair. Oi Polloi in great force, vox populi very loud, harshly and hoarsely inviting us to eat oranges —though that was not particularly enjoined if we only bought them—to drink sherbet, to have a shie at a cocoa-nut three sticks a penny, to treat ourselves to an electric shock, to try our weight, to buy gingerbread-nuts. Some confusion of ideas apparent with respect to the occasion. Shakespeare a good deal mixed up with Garibaldy. Boys, evidently unable to grapple with the subject in hand, give vent to their general feelings in the exclamation, "Whoop, Shakespeare!" which may, or may not, have been intended to be complimentary. I perceive that the tree has been already planted, but there is no great sensation in its immediate neighbourhood. The flying merchants and the perambulating speculators cannot complain that the Bard is exercising any superior attraction. He isn't. Populace cannot be induced to pay a shilling for admission to the enclosure round the tree. If there is anything that is considered not for an age, but for all time, it is the game of three sticks a penny. Some slight sensation, but not much, when Mr. Phelps is brought along, a man on each side of him holding him fast by the arms. It occurs to me that Mr. Phelps is in custody, and that the two men are policemen in plain clothes—very plain clothes, I may remark —taking him off to the station. I follow, intending to offer myself as bail, and try to catch the tragedian's mournful eye, but he is evidently ashamed of himself, and does not wish to be recognised; so I spare his feelings, and remain to review the procession, which consists of six men and a boy, the last carrying a brown paper parcel, which a youth of an inquiring mind, who turns himself upside down to read the inscription on the cover, informs me contains the "hode."

I followed Mr. Phelps with my eyes until I saw him dragged into the station-house and confronted with the inspector, who immediately took down the charge, the two officers in plain clothes evidently asseverating that the tragedian had assaulted them in the execution of their duty, and had been very obstropolous and voilent. What they did with him after that I cannot say, and few apparently cared to know; for, after the procession passed, the populace resumed the shieing of three sticks, and cracked nuts, and weighed itself, and took electric shocks, and generally dispersed itself over the hill out of sight of the Oak and out of hearing of the Ode. In the comfortable belief that I had seen all and done my duty, I now turned my steps homewards, but had not proceeded far when I heard the strains of martial music, and presently came upon a small army of Foresters marching on to the field, like the Prussians at Waterloo, a little late in the day. I understand that at this moment Mr. Phelps was standing with his watch in his hand wishing that either Chaos or the Foresters were come. That the Foresters were late seemed to be entirely owing to their zeal and love of glory, for they insisted upon bringing the banner of the Bard of Avon lodge with them, and the banner being large, requiring two poles, and the wind contrary, the army, which, in respect of its mainsail, seemed to be one of foot-marines, made rather a slow march, or rather voyage of it. That its progress had been an arduous and disastrous one became painfully evident to me as I proceeded onward. All along the road I encountered stray Foresters who had fallen out of the ranks, overcome by fatigue and—as they were generally showing their exhaustion in close proximity to a public-house—possibly beer. One gentleman in a full suit of Lincoln green and a hat with three exhausted feathers, was being danced round by a little circle of boys and girls, who seemed to have some vague notions that he might be Shakespeare, or at any rate some celebrity deserving of honour. This is the last glimpse I have of the celebration in London.

In little more than three hours after I am at the little station at Stratford-upon-Avon, in company with about a dozen others, who are all the pilgrims who have come by the G. W. R. that evening to worship at the shrine. As I had never visited Stratford before, I declined a conveyance, and walked into the town, prepared to feel that I was treading sacred ground, and to be much moved by all I saw. I expected to come upon "the House" suddenly, and I felt sure I should know it from its portraits. Every now and then I thought I saw it looming in the distance, and began to feel a thrill, but I was mistaken again and again, and the thrill subsided —subsided past recal, when I suddenly found myself in front of a yellow caravan, where they were exhibiting waxwork and a Scotch giant. This diverted my thoughts. I began to think of the pushing character of the people north of the Tweed, who had sent this Scotch giant to compete with the great English giant on his own ground and on his own natal day. Certainly the Scotch giant had the best of it in one respect. He was alive, O! alive!

Not coming upon the house fortuitously, as I expected, I thought it prudent—particularly as I had heard alarming accounts of the great influx of pilgrims, and the scarcity of accommodation—to look out for an hotel. Found one in the principal street, and was asked a guinea a night for a bed. Explained that I was not

Baron Rothschild, and was informed that I might have one higher up for half a guinea; consented to this, and had a momentary impression that I must be very rich; and that hitherto I had been regulating my expenditure on a scale altogether unbefitting my means. Could not rest for refreshment or anything, until I had seen the House; so immediately sallied out in search of it, trying to forget the yellow caravan and the Scotch giant. Did not like to inquire my way to the House; felt that I ought to be drawn to it by an influence; and that it would show a want of delicacy and veneration to ask any one to show it me, as if it were a bank or a post-office, or something of that sort. Stratford was not so large a town but that I might easily find the shrine which was its pride and glory, its sacred place. The paths worn with pilgrims' feet should direct me to it. I assure you I had got over the Scotch giant, and was fully primed with the right feeling. I have the bump of veneration strongly developed. Vestiges of antiquity, relics of great men, places with classic associations interest and move me deeply. I never pass through Temple Bar and take a walk down Fleet-street without thinking of Johnson and Goldsmith, and picturing them in my mind's eye. I had long looked forward to this day; long promised myself a visit to Stratford; many a time and oft had visited it in imagination, and realised all the sensations which its associations are calculated to inspire. And I was prepared to realise all these feelings now with tenfold intensity. But I could not find the House, and was obliged to ask my way to it after all. It is a fact, that the person to whom I applied for guidance looked puzzled, and turned first this way and then that, and at last confessed that he "really didn't know where the House was situated." He was apparently an intelligent man, in the cattle-dealing line, I fancy; but he had an excuse for his ignorance in so insignificant a matter — he had been only a fortnight in Stratford!

"Down there, sir, on the right-hand side of the way," said a native. I was thankful for the first part of the direction, but I did not want him to tell me on which side of the way; I wanted to find that out for myself, and I escaped hastily, lest the native should spoil my pleasure by pointing at the house with a showman's finger, and saying, "That's it!" I knew now that I was coming to it, and that a few more paces would bring me to it. I was approaching with all reverence, and with a feeling that the thrill was about to rise, when the sky was suddenly illuminated by a flash of bright light, accompanied by a peculiar rushing noise in the air. I was not left for a single moment in doubt as to the cause. I looked up, and saw that it was a rocket. They were letting off fireworks in the neighbouring meadow! A few more steps and I was in front of the House, and *I saw it for the first time by the light of fireworks!* The thrill did not rise. By the garish light of red and blue and green fires I saw a house which had been restored out of all its antiquity, which was trim, and neat, and angular, and varnished, and which, when the rockets exploded and rained down their spray of coloured fires, and the people shouted in the meadow, recalled a vision of Vauxhall. The general tea-garden aspect of the house was disappointing enough, but with the accompaniment of fireworks the effect was shockingly depressing. There was so much of the tea-garden about the place, that I should not have been at all surprised if some one had appeared at the window, sung a comic song, and asked conundrums. Indeed, on returning presently through the deserted street—there was not a soul in it besides myself on this evening of the Tercentenary—I heard the sound of minstrelsy proceeding from a public-house, and, looking through the window, I beheld a busker in the costume of the music-hall Irishman, dancing a jig and singing Limerick Races, while the townsmen of Shakespeare sat around and drank beer, and smoked pipes, and did homage to the Bard!

I knew that I should never feel the thrill after this. The restorer and the fireworks had done for me. So I went in for the display of fireworks pure and simple, and thought it, per se, not so very bad.

A few flags fluttering about the pretty little town, but no commotion until after the fireworks, when a dense crowd of yokels breaks into the streets, like an inundation of muddy water. Heedless, blundering yokels, with tremendous feet, who run against you, and stamp upon you, and scent the air with fustian and corduroy. Away they go, following the band, and when the band has blown itself out they disperse themselves among the little taverns, which seem to be in the proportion of one to three of the houses, and the streets are quiet and deserted again.

Revisited the House on Sunday morning, hoping to see it under more favourable circumstances. Well, there were no fireworks, and the new beams and laths let into the house did not look so varnished and glittering by daylight. Peeped in at one of the windows, never imagining that I would be admitted on that day, when a person immediately ran out and pounced upon me. Would I walk up? but first my sixpence. I paid my sixpence and walked up; but here again my pleasure was marred. The work of renovation had not been extended to the natal chamber, and I could well believe that no alteration had been made in it since Shakespeare's time; but it was occupied by two huge Warwickshire policemen in full uniform, whose presence was suggestive of a murder, or a robbery, or something of a similar nature requiring the superintendence of the authorities. I could have been much impressed by those old worm-eaten boards, which Shakespeare's feet had trod, but who could adore a sacred spot with two policemen standing at his elbow, irreverently lounging against the walls, and blowing their noses like thunder in great sheets of red calico?

Could not remain and muse in such company; so looked hurriedly round at the countless names scribbled all over the walls and ceiling, noticing "Walter Scott" awkwardly scratched on one of the diamond panes of the window, and rendered almost illegible by the names of Brown and Jones and Robinson that had been scrawled through it, over it, under it, and all about it; saw also the name of Thackeray neatly written in pencil on the ceiling, the place nearest his hand; and observed generally that the names that were written in the largest characters and in the most conspicuous places, were those of ladies and gentlemen from the United States of America. Paid another sixpence to the Museum, where I saw many interesting things, including Shakespeare's ring, which he must have worn on his thumb; the desk at which he sat at school, and on which he had only partly accomplished the carving of his initials, having been unable, apparently, to turn the tail of the S, leaving it in the condition of a C; many documents of the period, one relating to house property, with John Shakespeare, his mark (a very unsteady cross), at the foot of it; a letter to the poet from a friend in London, asking him for the loan of thirty pounds—the only epistle extant addressed to the poet; a large folio manuscript book, recently discovered in the Lord Chamberlain's office, in which Shakespeare is mentioned at the head of a list of other players, as having received "iiij yardes of skarlet red cloth," to enable him to appear in a procession on the occasion of the entry of King James into London; a flat candlestick found at the bottom of the well in New Place, the site of the Bard's grand house, a candlestick with which he may often have gone up to bed, and which, having been found at the bottom of a well, I am inclined to regard as a true relic; much mulberry and many clay pipes of modern aspect, which I reject altogether.

From the house to the church, where I deem myself fortunate in finding a seat in the chancel exactly opposite the Bard's monument. I am afraid I paid more attention to the bust than to the service. The effigy struck me very much, and gave me quite a new idea of the Bard's features and expression. Give me this bust, and I resign to you all the portraits. I have here the counterfeit presentment of a face suggestive above all things of strong vitality, freshness of spirit, and liveliness of disposition. I can imagine this to be the face of a man who was full of natural genius and did not know it; whose animal and mental spirits never flagged; who never toiled at anything; whose head never ached. I cannot discuss the question of the plaster cast of the face, said to have been taken after death, and used as a model by the artist who executed this effigy. I can only say that the effigy satisfies me, and that I can believe Shakespeare to have been exactly such a man as it represents. I am in a very favourable position in the chancel for making these observations and revolving these thoughts, but not for hearing the Archbishop of Dublin's sermon, which is preached far away up in the body of the church from a pulpit which I cannot see. Every now and then, however, I hear the word "Shakespeare," and catch portions of familiar quotations from his works, and, straining my ear, I hear the archbishop say by way of peroration, that Shakespeare was a gift from Heaven, for which we ought to give thanks. And after a three hours' sederunt, we stream out of the beautiful church, and march home to our dinners (getting cold) to the martial strains of the town band; and as I keep step to "See the conquering hero," I wonder if Exeter Hall is present, and what he is thinking of all this.

I walk across the fields in the evening to Ann Hathaway's cottage, and am charmed with the quiet rural beauty of the scene. The fields are sparkling with daisies and wild flowers, like stars in a firmament of green; the rooks are cawing high up on the trees; the groves are ringing with the songs of birds; the air is laden with the perfume of new leaves. That long-expected thrill comes unbidden now. Truly a place to nurse a poet. I sit lingering upon every stile, drawing in great draughts of the fresh exhilarating air, as if I could take in a stock of it to last me when I have returned to the murky city. And by-and-by little maidens come round me with offerings of bunches of daisies and cowslips, with a view to halfpence—and when I inquire the whereabouts of the cottage, they all volunteer to be my guides; and remonstrance and halfpence being equally in vain, I proceed onwards escorted by a whole troop of maidens, who seem to conduct me in triumph. I find the cottage more real than the house; no paint and varnish here; but all the old beams, many of the old stones, and a thatched roof that might be any age. A female descendant of the Hathaways receives me at the door joyfully, and conducts me through the apartments—the sitting-room and kitchen combined, where I imagined William and Ann sitting courting on the stone ledge under the great chimney—if, indeed, Ann's father ever allowed the lad to come beyond the garden-gate—up-stairs to the bedroom, where Ann probably arrayed herself in bridal attire previous to proceeding on William's arm to Luddington church. And here there is a wonderful old bedstead of black oak, which I imagined might be that "second-best" which the Bard bequeathed to his widow. The female descendant of the Hathaways could not say: perhaps it might be. Express myself very much pleased with the cottage, and descendant of the Hathaways hopes I will tell my friends that the show is worth seeing. On looking at the visitors' book I can understand her anxiety in this respect. Very few pilgrims have as yet walked across the fields to view Ann Hathaway's cottage. I return by the way I came, and find a missionary preaching under a hedge to a select congregation of rustics, denouncing the established clergy, especially in the form of archbishops, calling down vengeance upon the Pavilion, and describing Shakespeare as a worm.

The expected influx of visitors from all corners

of the earth did not take place at the beginning of the week, as the natives fondly hoped; and sleeping became a less expensive luxury. Beds declined in the market, and sofas that had been looking up on Saturday, were entirely at a discount. Omnibuses came rattling up from the station with only three or four persons in them. Wombwell's menagerie came in with a little village of yellow vans and many men and horses, looked about and thought it would go away again. Eventually, however, drew up beside the Scotch giant, and blew brass horns until it was black in the face; but to no purpose. Performing elephants were reported to be engaged in an entirely new and astonishing feat—that of eating their heads off. I call at the office of the committee, and find that a poet has sent in an invocation beginning:

Come let us Tercentenerate—

Wander forth again and invoke the town in the poet's words: Come let us tercentenerate, by all means. But at present all the tercentenerating is done by the town band, which for wind is a paragon. The performance of the Messiah at the Pavilion in the afternoon is, as respects the attendance, a failure. The audience consisted chiefly of the gentry of the neighbourhood, who came in in their carriages and went away again immediately the performance was over. It was a bitter sight for the natives to see the horses eating out of their own nose-bags, and the owners of the horses sitting in the carriages eating out of *their* own nose-bags—not patronising the town to the extent of a feed of corn, nor a biscuit and a glass of sherry. Prospect brightens, however, on Tuesday, when the players come. Tickets for Twelfth Night going off rapidly, and the indefatigable mayor, who is ubiquitous, begins to look more cheerful. The vicar, beloved of all the natives high and low, is seen driving through the town a phaeton, in which are seated side by side the Bishop of St. Andrews and Sir Andrew Aguecheek, the bishop craving for something more solid than Twelfth Night, and asking Sir Andrew why he doesn't play Macbeth. I go to the Pavilion for the first time to see the comedy, and am delighted with the splendid proportions of the building; consider it a model of what a theatre ought to be, and can only account for its perfection by the supposition that the architect set to work to construct a wooden tent and by accident hit upon a perfect theatre. The Pavilion is larger in area than any theatre in London, and yet the spectator can see and hear in every part of it, and this seems to be owing to the low roof and the absence of piled-up tiers of boxes. Will some one confer a great obligation on the London play-going public by bringing the Pavilion up to London, and planting it, say, in Leicester-square? Sitting in a wide open balcony, with plenty of room to move about, and neither oppressed with heat nor chilled with draughts of cold air, I thought Twelfth Night a more enjoyable comedy than I had ever thought it before, and considered that I had never seen it so well played even by the Haymarket company: which impressions, I have no doubt, were induced by the beauty and the comfort of the theatre. I had seen all the plays and all the actors, but I went night after night simply to enjoy the rare English luxury of being comfortable in a theatre.

Now that the players were coming down every day, there was an agreeable combination of the rus in urbe, of London and Stratford, about the place. When I had heard the band blow from all quarters of the town, and marched hither and thither, always turning into Henley-street to see the House, and never finding anybody near it, except on one occasion, when Punch was giving his performance exactly opposite; when I had mused myself nearly asleep in the old churchyard, or by the banks of the placid Avon; when I had inspected the portraits of the Bard in the Town-hall, and the plaster cast with some hairs adhering to the moustache, concerning which I had grave doubts, and the walking-stick and drinking-cup under the glass case, and more pipes from New Place; and gazed in through a window at an old rusty piece of iron, said to be the original key of the church where Shakespeare was married; and dropped in for a glass of ale at the Falcon, whose parlour is lined with the oak panelling from the Bard's grand house, and where the Bard himself is said to have sat of an evening and smoked a pipe, to the wonder and amazement of the village gossips—when I had done all these things, and tercentenerated (poet, I thank thee for that word!) to my heart's content, it was very pleasant to betake me to a certain snug room in the Red Horse, there to foregather with Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Sir Toby Belch, and Malvolio, and the two Dromios, and Touchstone, and many more, who were well bestowed at that hostel, when they were not being entertained by the most hospitable Mayor and the no less hospitable Vicar. And here, whenever a new comer arrived, Washington Irving's poker was brought in, tenderly encased in a blue baize sheath, and handed round to be admired. Washington Irving had stirred the fire with that very poker, in that very room, and so it has been a holy poker ever since. And here the Irish "busker" stole in one evening and gave us a recitation with remarkable emphasis and propriety, showing that, when occasion required, he had a soul above Limerick Races and Irish jigs.

Away on the top of an omnibus to Charlcote Park, the scene of the Bard's poaching exploit. An unbelieving phantom who has haunted me for days, and denied the birthplace, and the tomb, and everything else, now denies the poaching. I shut him up finally, by myself denying Shakespeare altogether. After a three miles' ride, we come upon the park, which is swarming with tame deer, and I picture young Will sneaking under the shadow of the wall to knock one of them on the head. Seeing that the deer are all as tame as hens or ducks, it came into my head that it was not poaching but something else, which I will not mention. Drive

up to the new gate, beside which is preserved an old post, which we are left to imagine is the very post on which the youthful poet fixed his lampoon upon Sir Thomas. And now a strange thought. The house and park of the Lucys are thrown open to visitors to-day in the name of one who once did the family the honour to steal a deer from its park. If the story be not true, it is still more remarkable that a slander in connexion with the Bard's name should have been enough to immortalise a house, and render a family famous. The house and grounds very beautiful—the gardens laid out to realise a picture by Watteau: the house reminding one of the magnificence of Versailles—oak floors, emblazoned ceilings, and the walls hung with rare pictures by old masters. The portrait of Sir Thomas Lucy over the mantelpiece, and the marble monument in the church forbid the idea of Justice Shallow. They are emphatically the portraits of a gentleman—a chivalrous-looking gentleman, with a fine head and a noble countenance.

Returning over the old bridge to Stratford, I am horrified to see the calm bosom of the Avon being ruffled by the paddle-wheels of a dirty steam-boat from the Birmingham Soho. Man on the bank touting for passengers to go up the river to Luddington, where the Bard was married. I have seen his birthplace, and I have seen his tomb, and I should like to view the scene of the middle event of his life; but I decline to navigate the Avon in a steam-boat, so forego Luddington, and content myself with another sight of the old key in the shop window in High-street.

Now, if you ask me if I passed a pleasant time and enjoyed myself, I answer that I passed a very pleasant time, and never enjoyed myself more in my life. Nature has made the neighbouring country a paradise of quiet beauty, and the mayor and the committee, as the representatives of Art, certainly did everything in their power to add to the delights of the town. The erection of that handsome Pavilion I regard as a great achievement, and too much praise cannot be awarded to the committee for its spirit and enterprise in providing entertainments utterly regardless of expense. As an example, the whole of the scenery and properties that were used in Romeo and Juliet at the Princess's Theatre, on Tuesday night, in London, were used in Stratford on Wednesday, and were seen again in London on the evening of Thursday. I think, as a whole, the celebration was as successful as could have been reasonably expected. The Pavilion was never filled, but it would have been difficult to fill so large a building even in London. If the visitors from the neighbourhood came and went away again the same day without spending money in the town, the natives had only themselves to blame. Thousands were scared away by the false reports of overcrowded hotels and high charges. But that honour to the Bard had much to do with the celebration, I will not pretend to declare, in the face of the fact, that the most successful entertainment in the Pavilion, specially erected for the purpose of performing his works, was a masked ball.

SUSSEX IRONMASTERS.

The ironworks of Sussex and Kent were the most important in England for sixteen hundred years. In the sandstone beds of the Forest Ridge, called by geologists the Hastings sand, which lies between the chalk and the oolite-layers, there is an abundance of ironstone. The ironstone beds lie in a north-easterly direction from Ashburnham and Heathfield to the neighbourhood of Crowborough; and timber for the ironstone, fuel suitable for smelting the ores, lay handy and plentiful—the country about having been called the Forest of Anderida, and the Weald, or wild wood, and being full of large oaks. The district thus combined both the conditions suitable for iron-making. When, in the far and obscure past, the iron-smelting began here, nobody can tell, but more than seventeen hundred years ago, in the year 120, the iron-ores of Sussex were extensively worked by the Romans, or by Teutonic iron-workers using Roman pottery, and the coins of Nero, of Vespasian, and Diocletian. Coins of Roman emperors and fragments of Roman pottery have been plentifully found, in a bed of cinder-heaps extending over several acres, at Old Land Farm, near Maresfield. Throughout the county, old mansions, places, and farm-houses occur, bearing such names as Furnace-place, Cinder Hill, Hammer Pond, and Forge Farm. But Sussex iron is now a mere curiosity, for the Sussex furnaces, which were probably blazing long before the Christian era, were all except one blown out by the end of the eighteenth century.

The discovery of the art of smelting iron by pit coal enabled the districts combining ironstone and coal to undersell the district in which, although the ores remained, the fuel was always becoming scarcer and dearer; but, whilst the iron trade flourished in Sussex, noteworthy incidents marked its history, and notable men pursued it. Several wealthy families in the county owe their fortunes to the iron trade. Smith, the most common of all names, is one which is now disguised and abandoned, but it ought to be remembered that this commonness of the name ought to accompany the characteristic of the English nation, for the Englishman is pre-eminently the blacksmith of the world. A Saxon means a sharp blade. Whatever other superiorities he may boast, it is chiefly in reference to iron tools and machinery that the superiority of the Englishman is admitted. He may call himself John Bull, but he is John Smith. And, in ancient times, the blacksmith was a great man, holding a high place at court, sitting at royal tables, and quenching the spark in his throat after hobbing and nobbing with kings. Indeed, Smith and Smithson (Hadad and Benhadad) were the

names of a Syrian dynasty, and even when an usurper of another family seized the throne, he took the names with it.

Vegetable and animal decomposition in the bed and delta of a mighty river produced, say the geologists, the iron of the ferruginous clays and sands of the Wealden. The clay ironstone was the ore of the Forest Ridge; at the western extremity of the Iron District the ferruginous sands were used; and in the Clay Country, a comparatively recent concretion, or bog iron, called iron rag, is frequently turned up by the plough. This pudding stone is composed of clay and gravel, and about twenty-five or thirty per cent of oxide of iron. Crowborough is the loftiest point of this Iron District, being about eight hundred and four feet above the level of the sea.

Mr. Mark Antony Lower, the authority followed by all compilers of information on this subject, is of opinion that the iron of this district was wrought long before the conquest of this island by the Romans. The Britons apprised the invaders that they knew already the uses of iron for military purposes, by mowing their ranks with their scythe-armed chariots. Cæsar says their coins were iron rings of a certain weight—a description applicable at the present day to certain coins or moneys used by the Chinese. Sussex and Kent were, probably, the maritime regions, which, he says, produced iron, although only in small quantities. Pliny alludes to the iron smelted in Britain. Abundant proofs of the activity of this industry during the period of the Roman occupation have been discovered. Scoriæ, or the cinders of the extinct furnaces, have been extensively used in repairing roads; and, in a heap of cinders lying ready for use on the side of the London-road, in 1844, a small bit of pottery attracted the attention of the Rev. Edward Turner. On examination, it proved to be undoubtedly Roman. The cinders, he learned on inquiry, came from Maresfield, his own parish, where lay a large heap of them at a place called Old Land Farm, near Buxted. When he visited this cinder-bed, six or seven acres in extent, the labourers were laying bare the remains of a Roman settlement. In a sort of grave lay a funeral deposit of pottery. Scarcely a barrow-load of cinders was driven out that did not contain fragments of pottery. Brass coins of Nero, Vespasian, Tetricus, and Diocletian, were identified. Deeming them old halfpence, the labourers had "chucked" Roman coins away because "the letters on 'em was pretty near rubbed out." Besides coins, there were found in these acres of cinders fragments of red or Samian ware, implements, fibulæ, armillæ, and mortaria.

Cæsar had recorded the unimportance of the iron industry of the maritime regions of Albion, and such was its insignificance in the period subsequent to the Roman occupation, that Sussex was not mentioned in Domesday Book as an iron producing country, although the iron trade of Somerset, Hereford, Gloucester, Cheshire, and Lincoln are mentioned. A Bishop of Chichester, even in the thirteenth century, wrote to his steward requesting him to buy iron in the neighbourhood of Gloucester for an hospital at Winchester. Of the Sussex ironworks, the earliest record is in a murage grant of Henry the Third, authorising the town of Lewes to exact a penny toll on every cart-load of iron from the neighbouring weald. A Master Henry, of Lewes, received payments a quarter of a century later for iron work in this king's chamber, and for his monument in Westminster Abbey. The Crown, in the reign of Edward the First, smelted the iron ores of St. Leonard's Forest. A complaint was laid before the Lord Mayor by the ironmongers of London against the smiths of the Weald, because the irons for wheels were shorter than they ought to be. The roads, if roads there were in those days, were so impassable that Sussex iron was carried to London by water. On the authority of the Wardrobe account (Carlton Ride MSS.), Mr. Mark Antony Lower says:

"In the thirteenth year of Edward the Second, Peter de Walsham, sheriff of Surrey and Sussex, by virtue of a precept from the King's Exchequer, made a provision of horse-shoes and nails of different sorts for the expedition against the Scots. The number furnished on the occasion was 3000 horse-shoes and 29,000 nails, and the expense of their purchase from various places within the sheriff's jurisdiction, and their delivery in London, by the hands of John de Norton, clerk, was 14*l.* 13s. 10d."

Iron ore paid tithe in Western Sussex in 1342. There is a cast-iron slab, much worn by being trodden upon, in Durwash church, with the inscription, in Latin: "Pray for the soul of John Collins." Until the civil war in the time of Charles the First, sewing needles were made in Chichester. In many old farm-houses in Sussex, brand-irons, brand-dogs or andirons, such as are still used in countries which burn wood fires, and supported the merry yule logs of our forefathers, still retain the places they have occupied for centuries within the ample chimneys. The cast-iron chimney-backs were ornamented with figures in relief of the most various kinds. Some of the heads appear to be portraits: one of them reminded me of the casts of Oliver Cromwell. Among these ornaments in relief are armorial bearings, the Royal arms, grapes and vine-leaves, the Tudor badge of rose and crown. Edward the Third used hooped cannon against the Scots in 1327, nineteen years before they were employed at Creçy against the French, but there is no evidence bearing on the question whether or not they were made in Sussex. But two centuries later, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, Ralph Hogge, aided by one Peter Baude, a Frenchman, cast cannon at Buxted. The device of the Hoggs, Hoggés, Hoggéts, or Huggets, is the animal, and the name was, says Mr. Lower, probably of Norman origin. The traditionary distich is still devoutly believed in the neighbourhood of Huget's Furnace, near Buxted and Mayfield—

Master Hugget and his man John,
They did cast the first Can=non.

Down to the present day many Huggets are blacksmiths in East Sussex. The terms pig and sow are still associated with iron, and this may be the origin of the device, and the name. And Master Huggett and his man John may have a more assured place in the Story of the Guns than has yet been won by either Armstrong or Whitworth. Two of Peter Baude's brass guns are still to be seen in the Tower of London. The cannon made at Robert's Bridge were floated down the Rother by means of "shuts," a sort of locks.

As men of free minds, the Sussex ironmasters furnished several Protestant martyrs during the Reformation struggle. Richard Woodman, of Wartleton, in one of his examinations before the Bishop of Winchester, said: "Let me go home, I pray you, to my wife and children, to see them kept, and other poore folke that I would set aworke, by the help of God. I have set aworke a hundreth persons, ere this, all the yeare together." Richard Woodman was burnt at Lewes in 1557. Archbishop Parker denounced the iron trade to Queen Elizabeth as "a plague."

Early editions of Camden's Britannia contain quaint and graphic pictures of the iron districts of the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts. Speaking of Sussex, he says: "Full of iron mines it is in sundry places, where, for the making and founding thereof, there be furnaces on every side, and a huge deal of wood is yearly burnt, to which purpose divers brooks in many places are brought to run in one channel, and sundry meadows turned into pools and waters that they might be of power sufficient to drive hammer-mills, which, beating upon the iron, resound all over the places adjoining."

Extracts from Memoirs of the Gale Family, supplied by Mr. R. W. Blencowe to the Transactions of the Sussex Archæological Society, give us an insight into the minds and characters of the ironmasters whose energy and sagacity guided this noisy industry, which contrasts so strikingly with the quiet now reigning among the Sussex downs, except where it is disturbed occasionally by the distant roar of a railway train, or the screech of the locomotive whistle. In the prospect of leaving his sons "in a world of fraud and deceit, a world of all manner of wickedness in all sorts of people," Leonard Gale wrote the following breviate of his birth and living. "The advice of me, Leonard Gale, to my two sons, Leonard and Harry, being in the 67th year of my age, A.D. 1687. My sons hearken unto the words of your loving father, who earnestly desireth your welfare, and encreasing of grace, learning, and riches. I was born in the parish of Sevenoake in Kent, my father, a blacksmith, living in Riverhead-street, in the parish aforesaid, who lived there in very good repute, and drove a very good trade; his name Francis Gale: my mother was the daughter of one George Pratt, a very good yeoman, living at Chelsford, about five miles from Riverhead; my father had, by a former wife, two sons, and by my mother three sons and one daughter; and when I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, my father and mother going to visit a friend at Sensom (Kemsing?) in the said county, took the plague, and quickly after they came home, my mother fell sick, and about six days after died, nobody thinking of such a disease. My father made a great burial for her, and abundance came to it, not fearing anything, and notwithstanding several women layd my mother forth, and no manner of clothes were taken out of the chamber when she died, yet not one person took the distemper; this I set down as a miracle. After her burial, we were all well one whole week, and a great many people frequented our house, and we our neighbours' houses, but at the week's end, in two days, fell sick my father, my eldest brother, my sister, and myself; and in three days after this my two younger brothers, Edward and John, fell sick, and though I was very ill, my father sent me to market to buy provisions, but before I came home it was noysed abroad that it was the plague, and as soon as I was come in adoors they charged us to keep in, and set a strong watch over us, yet all this while no one took the distemper of or from us, and about the sixth day after they were taken, three of them dyed in three hours, one after another, and were all buryed in one grave, and about two days after the two youngest dyed both together, and were buryed in one grave. All this while I lay sick in another bed, and the tender looked every hour for my death; but it pleased God most miraculously to preserve me, and without any sore breaking, only I had a swelling in my groin, which was long ere it sunk away, and I have been the worse for it ever since, and when I was recovered, I was shut up with two women, one man, and one child, for three months, and neither of them had the distemper. And now, at between sixteen and seventeen, I came into the world, to shift for myself, having one brother left, which was out at prentice, who presently fell out with me about what my father had left me, and when I had been at about 10*l.* charges, we came to an agreement. I, by my guardian, had the administration, and my brother quickly spent all his portion, and went to sea, and died; and I, entering into the world at this age, worth about 200*l.*, within the space of two years and a half, ran out 150*l.* of it, not with ill husbandry, for I laboured night and day to save what I had left to me, but bad servants and trusting was the ruin of me, and then I turned away both man and maid, and lived starke alone for the space of one month, in which time I cast up my accounts, and found that I was not worth 50*l.* if I had sold myself to my shirt; then I was in a great strait, and knew not which way to steer, but I cried unto the Lord with my whole heart and with tears, and He heard my cry, and put into my mind to try one year more, to see what I could do, for I resolved to spend nothing but mine own, and I resolved always 'to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man.' Then I took a boy to strike and to blow

for me, and a man to work by the piece, but kept no maid nor woman in my house; and then I so thrived that, within two years and a half, I got back all that I had lost before, so that by the time I came to twenty-one years of age, I had lost 150*l.* and got it again, and I began to be looked upon as a thriving man; and so I was, for all the time I kept a smith's forge I laid by 100*l.* a year, one with another, and having gotten enough to keep me well, and being burdened with free quartering of soldiers, I left off, and came down into Sussex, after one Spur, who owed me between 40*l.* and 50*l.*, and he being in a bad capacity to pay me, though he did afterwards pay me all. Before I went home again I took St. Leonard's forge, and so kept a shop to sell iron, and let out the smith's forge. I had not been in the country one year but Mr. Walter Burrell, whom I looked upon as my mortal enemy, sent to speak with me, and when I came to him he told me he heard a very good report of me, and desired to be acquainted with me, and he told me if I would let his son Thomas come into partnership with me, he would help me to "sows" nearer, and better, and cheaper than I had bought before. I told him I wondered to hear such things from him, for I heard he was my mortal enemy because I took that forge, and I told him that if he would let me go partners with him in the furnace, he should go partners with me in the forge. He desired time to consider of it, and he rode presently into Kent to inquire of me, and found such an account of me, that he told me I should go partners with him in all his works."

This partnership lasted about fifteen years, and the trade in iron falling off, it was dissolved, and Leonard Gale became the sole proprietor of Tinsloe forge. "Considering," he says, "that I had got about 5000*l.* or 6000*l.*, having traded about thirty years, and being about forty-six years of age, and having neither brother, sister, nor child in the world, I bethought myself about taking a wife, and chose this woman, your mother, the daughter of Mr. Johnson, with whom I had 500*l.* and one year's board with her; and now, at the writing of these lines, I have attained unto the age of sixty-six years, having been married about twenty years, in which time, as God hath been pleased to send me five children, so hath He improved my estate to at least 16,000*l.*, which is 500*l.* a year, one year with another, which is a very great miracle to me how I should come to so great an estate, considering my small dealings, the bad times, and my great losses by bad debts, suits of law, and by building; which enforces me to extol the name of the great God, for He was always my director in all good ways, and when I was in distress I called upon Him, and He heard me, and gave me more than ever my heart desired; for I had no man in the world that would stand by me, either for advice or for money when I wanted, which enforced me to be careful not to run beyond my own substance, and always resolved 'to keep a good conscience towards God and towards man,' and not to do to others that which I would not have them do to me." . . . "Thus, my son, I have set down a short breviate of my life unto this day, and what the Almighty hath bestowed on me, in the sixty-sixth year of my age, in all which time I hated idleness and vain-gloriousness, and I never boasted of anything but to the glory of God, and my own comfort. I always held the Scriptures for the rule of life to walk by; and I always counted it to be a deadly sin to be in any man's debt longer than they were willing to trust me." . . . "My son, Leonard, I pray you to have a tender respect unto your brothers and sisters, for few men would have left so great an estate to you, and so little to them, when I have gained it all by the blessing of God and my own industry; therefore grudge not anything that I may give them; and next have a tender respect to your mother, who hath been very tender over you in bringing you up, and who nourished you with her own breast." . . . "Next I advise you to have a care and be not too familiar with your vile neighbours, as I have been, and you now see how they hate me; indeed, they are but a beggarly and bastard generation, and whom I have been at great charges with. Next, suffer no man to inclose my land, nor build houses on the waste, for there is Denshies, and Bowmans, and Finches, which are cottages which will be a perpetual charge to you and yours, and so with Piggotts. Next, I charge you never to suffer that lane to be inclosed by Woolborough Sears, who took delight to damn up highways to his own ruin; and so it was observed by his neighbours, for he never thrived after he took in Langly-lane, and burned the Crawley footway, and to my knowledge he never thrived since he took in this lane. Next, I advise you to have a great care of ill and debauched company, especially wicked and depraved priests, such as are at this present time about me, as Lee and Troughton, of Worth; never give any of them any entertainment, nor none of their companions, for they are most vile and wicked men to my knowledge. Next, my advice is, that whatever estates either of you ever attain to, yet follow some employment, which will keep you from abundance of expenses and charges, and take you off from evil thoughts and wicked actions; and observe the mechanic priests, which have nothing to do but to come to church one hour or two on a Sunday, and all the week besides they will eat and drink at such men's houses as you are, but avoid them; but love and cherish every honest godly priest wherever you find them; and, above all, hold fast the ancient Protestant religion, for a better religion cannot be found out than that is, only I could wish the abuses were taken away, and wicked men found out, or punished, or turned out. Next, my advice is, that above all things you avoid swearing, lying, drunkenness, and gaming, which are the ruin of all men's estates, that are ruined in this nation, and pride of apparell, which is a great consumer of men's estates in this kingdom."

Pride of apparel, denounced by this Puritan ironfounder, was one of the vices which pre-

pared and provoked the civil war. In the reign of James the First of England a satirical poet said:

They wore a farm in shoestrings, edged with gold,
And spangled garters, worth a copyhold.

Harrison, the old chronicler, said of the women of London even in the reign of Elizabeth, "I have met with some so disguised that it hath passed my skill to discover whether they were men or women."

Three years after writing his advice to his sons, Leonard Gale the elder died in 1690, and Leonard, his eldest son, succeeded to his property. This Leonard resided four years as a gentleman commoner at University College, and was called to the bar. "Being," he says, "very distrustful of my own abilities, and too great a lover of idleness and ease, I neglected the study of the law, and devoted myself to management of my property in the country." Eight years later he bought the estate and timber of Crabbett for 9000*l.* "Two reasons," he says, "chiefly induced me to buy Crabbett; one was that my estate might lie together, and the other that I might have a good estate, which I had not before, for I was always afraid of building. Building is a sweet impoverishing." . . . "August 19, 1703, being near thirty years old, I married with Mrs. Sarah Knight, my mother's sister's only daughter, after I had made my court to her for two or three years. By her I had a plentiful fortune (between 7000*l.* or 8000*l.*). We were married in the parish church of Charlwood by Mr. Hesketh, the rector. She was truly my own choice, and I am extremely well satisfied with it, and do verily believe that for truth and sincerity, kindness and fidelity, humility and good nature, she has few equals. I am sure none can exceed her, and I pray God to continue us long together in health and prosperity, and to crown us with all those blessings which He has promised to those that serve Him and walk in his ways."

This blacksmith's son was elected a Member of Parliament for East Grinsted in 1710, without expense or opposition. The power of bribes and threats he deplores as "an eternal scandal to the whole nation." "Our lands and liberties must be precarious; our so much boasted privilege of having free parliaments must be utterly lost. For this is an observation founded on the greatest truth, that he that will buy his seat in parliament will sell his vote; and to what misery and poverty such men will soon bring this nation God only knows!" This Leonard Gale advised his children to be sure as they grew rich in estate to grow richer in wisdom and virtue, taking care that their income should exceed their expenses, and that they daily heard and read more than they spoke or told. When he was fifty-two years of age, he said, "I am now worth at Michaelmas, 1724, at a reasonable computation, 40,667*l.*; though I have been guilty of many oversights in missing good bargains and taking bad." When fifty-eight years of age, he said, "My memory is growing worse, for I have made some mistake in my accounts within the last three years of above 150*l.*, which I cannot possibly find out after my utmost endeavours." His account of the marriage of his daughter Philippa reminds us of the change which has come over English manners during the past century. "My daughter Philippa, 'an ornament to her sex, her parents, and the family she is grafted in,' was married January 21, 1730, to James Clitherow, Esq., she being in the twenty-first year of her age, and he about thirty-seven. I gave her 8000*l.* to her portion, and she has 1200*l.* per annum settled upon her and her heirs, of which 600*l.* per annum is for her jointure. All our relatives, except Dr. Woodward and his wife, were at the wedding, which was on Thursday, and they stayed a week with us at Crabbett, and that day fortnight she went home to Brentford, accompanied by her mother, who stayed three weeks with her, and Mrs. Ann Clitherow, his sister; and Tim Nightingale, who had lived with us near twelve years, went with her for her maid. There was abundance of people at Worth church on the wedding, and a great many strowers; and the Sunday following there was a prodigious congregation at church, when Mr. Hampton preached an excellent sermon on this text, 'Marriage is honourable in all men, and the bed undefiled;' being the same sermon he preached the next Sunday after I marryed, near twenty-five years before." Leonard Gale died in his seventy-seventh year, a few months after the death of his only son Henry, and the wealth earned by three generations of frugal and careful men passed to the families of the husbands of his daughters.

The most celebrated, however, of the Sussex ironmasters was far more ancient than the Gales, the legendary St. Dunstan. The tendency of historical criticism has not been favourable to the more piquant points of ancient story; and Mr. Mark Antony Lower allows no great antiquity even to the tongs which is said to have held so firmly the nose of the arch-tempter. The parish of Mayfield was famous for its iron. There were considerable ironworks upon the archiepiscopal estate. The massive iron hand-rail of the grand staircase is one of the relics of this manufacture. "The hammer, anvil, and tongs of St. Dunstan preserved here," says Mr. M. A. Lower, "seem to refer as much to the iron trade so famous in these parts, as to the alleged proficiency of the saint in the craft of a blacksmith. The anvil and tongs are of no great antiquity, but the hammer with its iron handle may be considered a mediæval relic." Archbishops, like doctors, differ; and, although Archbishop Parker, as we have seen, denounced the iron trade as a plague, there have been ecclesiastical dignitaries equally high who have encouraged it, and saints who pursued it with marvellous results.

The Morleys of Glynde worked the forge at Hawksden. They were established there in the sixteenth century, and, in the seventeenth, Herbert Morley, the regicide, died, possessed of these works, which descended to his sons.

Among the greatest of these families of iron-

founders were the Fowles of Riverhall. They built a fine mansion in 1591, which still retains traces of its former grandeur. King James gave to William Fowle a grant of free warren over his numerous manors and lands in Wadhurst, Frant, Rotherfield, and Mayfield. The fourth in descent and heir-male of this William Fowle left Riverhall, and kept the turnpike-gate in Wadhurst. His grandson, Nicholas Fowle, a day-labourer, emigrated to America in 1839, with his son John Fowle, a wheelwright, and a numerous young family, carrying with them, as a family relic, the royal grant of free warren given to their ancestor.

This family, like many others, rose and fell with the Sussex iron trade. Geologists say there is still in this district more and finer iron-ore than in many of the coal-fields of England; but, when the art of using coal in smelting instead of charcoal was discovered, it was found to be cheaper. Without intending it, the coal-miners interposed to preserve the woods from the destruction lamented by the poets. Drayton, in his Polyolbion, made the trees denounce the iron trade in the following strain:

Jove's oak, the warlike ash, vein'd elm, the softer beech,
Short hazel, maple plain, light asp, the bending wych,
Tough holly, and smooth birch must altogether burn.
What should the builder serve, supplies the forger's turn;
When under public good, base private gain takes hold,
And we, poor woful woods, to ruin lastly sold.

The last of the Sussex furnaces, the property of Lord Ashburnham, was blown out in 1825. Bars of Sussex iron are now curiosities or relics. The iron of the entrances to the new church at Elsted was made at Ashburnham in one of the last heats of the forge. A true Sussex man feels a peculiar thrill of regret when he passes the railings of St. Paul's in London; and, the ores being plentiful in his native fields, he may be excused for fancying that an industry, which an improvement in metallurgy has put down, a new discovery may any day raise up again, and anthracite, or some other fuel, enable Sussex again to supply iron for armies or for fleets, for monuments or firesides.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XIV. THE LAST WALK IN THE GARDEN.

The only letter Calvert found at the post-office for the villa was one in the vicar's hand, addressed to Miss Grainger. Nothing from Loyd himself, nor any newspaper. So far, then, Loyd had kept his pledge. He awaited to see if Calvert would obey his injunctions before he proceeded to unmask him to his friends.

Calvert did not regard this reserve as anything generous—he set it down simply to fear. He said to himself, "The fellow dreads me; he knows that it is never safe to push men of my stamp to the wall; and he is wise enough to apply the old adage, about leaving a bridge to the retreating enemy. I shall have more difficulty in silencing the women, however. It will be a hard task to muzzle their curiosity; but I must try some plan to effect it. Is that telegram for me?" cried he, as a messenger hastened hither and thither in search for some one.

"Il Signor Grainger?"

"Yes, all right," said he, taking it. It was in these few words.

"They find it can be done—make tracks.

"Drayton."

"They find it can be done," muttered he. "Which means, it is legal to apprehend me. Well, I supposed as much! I never reckoned on immunity; and as to getting away, I'm readier for it, and better provided too, than you think for, Master Algernon. Indeed, I can't well say what infatuation binds me to this spot, apart from the peril that attends it. I don't know that I am very much what is called in love with Florence, though I'd certainly marry her if she'd have me; but for that there are, what the lady novelists call, 'mixed motives,' and I rather suspect it is not with any especial or exclusive regard for her happiness that I'd enter into the holy bonds. I should like to consult some competent authority on the physiology of hatred—why it is that, though scores of fellows have injured me deeply in life, I never bore any, no, nor the whole of them collectively, the ill will that I feel for that man. He has taken towards me a tone that none have ever dared to take. He menaces me! Fifty have wronged: none have ever threatened me. He who threatens, assumes to be your master, to dictate the terms of his forbearance, and to declare under what conditions he will spare you. Now, Master Loyd, I can't say if this be a part to suit *your* powers, but I know well, the other is one which in no way is adapted to *mine*. Nature has endowed me with a variety of excellent qualities, but, somehow, in the hurry of her benevolence, she forgot patience! I suppose one can't have everything!"

While he thus mused and speculated, the boat swept smoothly over the lake, and Onofrio, not remarking the little attention Calvert vouchsafed to him, went on talking of "I Grangeri" as the most interesting subject he could think of. At last Calvert's notice was drawn to his words by hearing how the old lady had agreed to take the villa for a year, with the power of continuing to reside there longer if she were so minded.

The compact had been made only the day before, after Calvert had started for Milan, evidently—to his thinking—showing that it had been done with reference to something in Loyd's last letter. "Strange that she did not consult *me* upon it," thought he; "I who have been her chief counsellor on everything. Perhaps the lease of my confidence has expired. But how does it matter? A few hours more, and all these people shall be no more to me than that lazy cloud that is hanging about the mountain-top.

They may live or die, or marry, or mourn, and all be as nothing to me—as if I had never met them. And what shall *I* be to *them*, I wonder?" cried he, with a bitter laugh; "a very dreadful dream, I suppose; something like the memory of a shipwreck, or a fire from which they escaped without any consciousness of the means that rescued them! A horrid nightmare whose terrors always come back in days of depression and illness. At all events, I shall not be 'poor Calvert,' 'that much to be pitied creature who really had some good in him.' No, I shall certainly be spared all commiseration of that kind, and they'll no more recur willingly to my memory than they'll celebrate the anniversary of some day that brought them shame and misfortune.

"Now, then, for my positively last appearance in my present line of character! And yonder I see the old dame on the look-out for me; she certainly has some object in meeting me before her nieces shall know it.—Land me in that nook there, Onofrio, and wait for me."

"I have been very impatient for your coming," said she, as he stepped on shore; "I have so much to say to you; but, first of all, read this. It is from the vicar."

The letter was not more than a few lines, and to this purport: he was about to quit the home he had lived in for more than thirty years, and was so overwhelmed with sorrow and distress, that he really could not address his thoughts to any case but the sad one before him. "'All these calamities have fallen upon us together; for although,' he wrote, 'Joe's departure is the first step on the road to future fortune, it is still separation, and at our age who is to say if we shall ever see him again?'"

"Skip the pathetic bit, and come to this. What have we here about the P. and O. steamers?" cried Calvert.

"'Through the great kindness of the Secretary of State, Joe has obtained a free passage out—a favour, as I hear, very rarely granted—and he means to pay you a flying visit; leaving this on Tuesday, to be with you on Saturday, and, by repairing to Leghorn on the following Wednesday, to catch the packet at Malta. This will give him three entire days with you, which, though they be stolen from us, neither his mother nor myself have the heart to refuse him. Poor fellow, he tries to believe—perhaps he does believe—that we are all to meet again in happiness and comfort, and I do my best not to discourage him; but I am now verging on seventy——'"

"How tiresome he is about his old age; is there any more about his son?" asked Calvert, impatiently.

"Yes, he says here: 'Joe is, as you may imagine, full of business, and what between his interviews with official people, and his personal cares for his long journey, has not a moment to spare. He will, however, write to-morrow, detailing all that he has done and means to do. Of that late suggestion that came from you about referring us to a third party, neither Joseph nor myself desire to go back; indeed, it is not at a moment like the present we would open a question that could imperil the affections that unite us. It is enough to know that we trust each other, and need neither guarantees nor guidance.'"

"The old knave!" cried Calvert. "A priest is always a Jesuit, no matter what Church he belongs to."

"Oh, Mr. Calvert."

"But he's quite right after all. I am far too worldly-minded in my notions to negotiate with men of such exalted ideas as he and his son possess. Besides, I am suddenly called away. I shall have to leave this immediately. They are making a fuss about that unfortunate affair at Basle, and want to catch me as a witness; and, as my evidence would damage a fellow I really pity, though I condemn, I must keep out of the way."

"Well, you are certain to find us here whenever you feel disposed to have your own room again. I have taken the villa for another year."

Not paying the slightest attention to this speech, he went on: "There is one point on which I shall be absolute. No one speaks of me when I leave this. Not alone that you abstain yourself from any allusion to my having been here, and what you know of me, but that you will not suffer any other to make me his topic. It is enough to say that a question of my life is involved in this request. Barnard's fate has involved me in a web of calumny and libel, which I am resolved to bear too, to cover the poor fellow's memory. If, however, by any indiscretion of my friends—and remember, it can only be of my friends under this roof—I am driven to defend myself, there is no saying how much more blood will have to flow in this quarrel. Do you understand me?"

"Partly," said she, trembling all over.

"This much you cannot mistake," said he, sternly; "that my name is not to be uttered, nor written, mind that. If, in his short visit, Loyd should speak of me, stop him at once. Say, 'Mr. Loyd, there are reasons why I will not discuss that person; and I desire that my wish be understood as a command.' You will impress your nieces with the same reserve. I suppose, if they hear that it is a matter which involves the life of more than one, that they will not need to be twice cautioned. Bear in mind, this is no caprice of mine; it is no piece of that Calvert eccentricity, to which, fairly enough sometimes, you ascribe many of my actions. I am in a position of no common peril; I have incurred it to save the fair fame of a fellow I have known and liked for years. I mean, too, to go through with it; that is, I mean up to a certain point to sacrifice myself. Up to a certain point, I say, for if I am pushed beyond that, then I shall declare to the world: Upon you and your slanderous tongues be the blame, not mine the fault, for what is to happen now."

He uttered these words with a rapidity and vehemence that made her tremble from head to

foot. This was not, besides, the first time she had witnessed one of those passionate outbursts for which his race was celebrated, and it needed no oath to confirm the menace his speech shadowed forth.

"This is a pledge, then," said he, grasping her hand. "And now to talk of something pleasanter. That old uncle of mine has behaved very handsomely; has sent me some kind messages, and, what is as much to the purpose, some money;" and, as he spoke, he carelessly drew from his pocket a roll of the bank-notes he had so lately won at play. "'Before making any attempt to re-enter the service,' he says, 'you must keep out of the way for a while.' And he is right there; the advice is excellent, and I mean to follow it. In his postscript he adds: 'Thank Grainger'—he means Miss Grainger, but you know how blunderingly he writes—'for all her kindness to you, and say how glad we should all be to see her at Rocksley, whenever she comes next to England.'"

The old lady's face grew crimson; shame at first, and pride afterwards, overwhelming her. To be called Grainger was to bring her back at once to the old days of servitude—that dreary life of nursery governess—which had left its dark shadow on all her later years; while to be the guest at Rocksley was a triumph she had never imagined in her vainest moments.

"Oh, will you tell him how proud I am for his kind remembrance of me, and what an honour I should feel it to pay my respects to him?"

"They'll make much of you, I promise you," said Calvert, "when they catch you at Rocksley, and you'll not get away in a hurry. Now let us go our separate ways, lest the girls suspect we have been plotting. I'll take the boat and row down to the steps. Don't forget all I have been saying," were his last words as the boat moved away.

"I hope I have bound that old fool in heavy recognisances to keep her tongue quiet; and now for the more difficult task of the young ones," said he, as he stretched himself full length in the boat, like one wearied by some effort that taxed his strength. "I begin to believe it will be a relief to me to get away from this place!" he muttered to himself, "though I'd give my right hand to pass the next week here, and spoil the happiness of those fond lovers. Could I not do it?" Here was a problem that occupied him till he reached the landing at the villa, but as he stepped on shore, he cried, "No, this must be the last time I shall ever mount these steps!"

Calvert passed the day in his room; he had much to think over, and several letters to write. Though the next step he was to take in life in all probability involved his whole future career, his mind was diverted from it by the thought that this was to be his last night at the villa—the last time he should ever see Florence. "Ay," thought he, "Loyd will be the occupant of this room in a day or two more. I can fancy the playful tap at this door, as Milly goes down to breakfast—I can picture the lazy fool leaning out of that window, gazing at those tall snow-peaks, while Florence is waiting for him in the garden—I know well all the little graceful attentions that will be prepared for him, vulgar dog as he is, who will not even recognise the especial courtesies that have been designed for him; well, if I be not sorely mistaken, I have dropped some poison in his cup. I have taught Florence to feel that courage is the first of manly attributes, and, what is more to the purpose, to have a sort of half dread that it is not amongst her lover's gifts. I have left her as my last legacy that rankling doubt, and I defy her to tear it out of her heart! What a sovereign antidote to all romance it is, to have the conviction, or, if not the conviction, the impression, the mere suspicion, that he who spouts the fine sentiments of the poet with such heartfelt ardour, is a poltroon, ready to run from danger and hide himself at the approach of peril. I have made Milly believe this; she has no doubt of it; so that if sisterly confidences broach the theme, Florence will find all her worst fears confirmed. The thought of this fellow as my rival maddens me!" cried he, as he started up and paced the room impatiently. "Is not that Florence I see in the garden? Alone too! What a chance!" In a moment he hastened noiselessly down the stairs, opened the drawing-room window, and was beside her.

"I hope the bad news they tell me is not true," she said, as they walked along side by side.

"What is the bad news?"

"That you are going to leave us."

"And are you such a hypocrite, Florry, as to call this bad news, when you and I both know how little I shall be needed here in a day or two? We are not to have many more moments together; these are probably the very last of them; let us be frank and honest. I'm not surely asking too much in that! For many a day you have sealed up my lips by the threat of not speaking to me on the morrow. Your menace has been, if you repeat this language, I will not walk with you again. Now, Florry, this threat has lost its terror, for to-morrow I shall be gone, gone for ever, and so to-day, here now, I say once more, I love you! How useless to tell me that it is all in vain; that you do not, cannot return my affection. I tell you I can no more despair than I can cease to love you! In the force of that love I bear you is my confidence. I have the same trust in it that I would have in my courage."

"If you but knew the pain you gave me by such words as these——"

"If you knew the pain they cost me to utter them!" cried he. "It is bringing a proud heart very low to sue as humbly as I do. And for what? Simply for time—only time. All I ask is, do not utterly reject one who only needs your love to be worthy of it. When I think of what I was when I met you first—you!—and feel the change you have wrought in my whole nature; how you have planted truthfulness where there

was once but doubt; how you have made hope succeed a dark and listless indifference—when I know and feel that in my struggle to be better it is you, and you alone, are the prize before me, and that if that be withdrawn life has no longer a bribe to my ambition—when I think of these, Florry, can you wonder if I want to carry away with me some small spark that may keep the embers alive in my heart?"

"It is not generous to urge me thus," said she, in a faint voice.

"The grasp of the drowning man has little time for generosity. You may not care to rescue me, but you may have pity for my fate."

"Oh, if you but knew how sorry I am——"

"Go on, dearest. Sorry for what?"

"I don't know what I was going to say; you have agitated and confused me so, that I feel bewildered. I shrink from saying what would pain you, and yet I want to be honest and straightforward."

"If you mean that to be like the warning of the surgeon—I must cut deep to cure you—I can't say I have courage for it."

For some minutes they walked on side by side without a word. At length he said, in a grave and serious tone, "I have asked your aunt, and she has promised me that, except strictly amongst yourselves, my name is not to be mentioned when I leave this. She will, if you care for them, give you my reasons; and I only advert to it now amongst other last requests. This is a promise, is it not?"

She pressed his hand and nodded.

"Will you now grant me one favour? Wear this ring for my sake; a token of mere memory, no more! Nay, I mean to ask Milly to wear another. Don't refuse me." He drew her hand towards him as he spoke, and slipped a rich turquoise ring upon her finger. Although her hand trembled, and she averted her head, she had not courage to say him no.

"You have not told us where you are going to, nor when we are to hear from you!" said she, after a moment.

"I don't think I know either!" said he, in his usual reckless way. "I have half a mind to join Schamyl—I know him—or take a turn with the Arabs against the French. I suppose," added he, with a bitter smile, "it is my fate always to be on the beaten side, and I'd not know how to comport myself as a winner."

"There's Milly making a signal to us. Is it dinner-time already?" said she.

"Ay, my last dinner here!" he muttered. She turned her head away, and did not speak.

On that last evening at the villa nothing very eventful occurred. All that need be recorded will be found in the following letter, which Calvert wrote to his friend Drayton, after he had wished his hosts a good night, and gained his room, retiring, as he did, early, to be up betimes in the morning and catch the first train for Milan.

"Dear Drayton,—I got your telegram, and though I suspect you are astray in your 'law,' and don't believe these fellows can touch me, I don't intend to open the question, or reserve the point for the twelve judges, but mean to evacuate Flanders at once; indeed, my chief difficulty was to decide which way to turn, for having the whole world before me where to choose, left me in that indecision which the poet pronounces national when he says,

> I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,
> Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear!

Chance, however, has done for me what my judgment could not. I have been up to Milan and had a look through the newspapers, and I see what I have often predicted has happened. The Rajahs of Bengal have got sick of their benefactors, and are bent on getting rid of what we love to call the blessings of the English rule in India. Next to a society for the suppression of creditors, I know of no movement which could more thoroughly secure my sympathy. The brown skin is right. What has he to do with those covenanted and uncovenanted Scotchmen who want to enrich themselves by bullying him? What need has he of governors-general, political residents, collectors, and commanders-in-chief? Could he not raise his indigo, water his rice-fields, and burn his widow, without any help of ours? particularly as our help takes the shape of taxation and vexatious interference.

"I suppose all these are very unpatriotic sentiments; but in the same proportion that Britons never will be slaves, they certainly have no objection to make others such, and I shudder in the very marrow of my morality to think that but for the accident of an accident I might at this very moment have been employed to assist in repressing the noble aspirations of niggerhood, and helping to stifle the cry of freedom that now resounds from the Sutlej to the Ganges. Is not that a twang from your own lyre, Master D.? Could our Own Correspondent have come it stronger?

"Happily, her Majesty has no further occasion for my services, and I can take a brief from the other side. Expect to hear, therefore, in some mysterious paragraph, 'That the mode in which the cavalry were led, or the guns pointed, plainly indicated that a European soldier held command on this occasion; and, indeed, some assert that an English officer was seen directing the movements on our flank.' To which let me add the hope that the —— Fusiliers may be there to see; and if I do not give the major a lesson in battalion drill, call me a Dutchman! There is every reason why the revolt should succeed. I put aside all the bosh about an enslaved race and a just cause, and come to the fact of the numerical odds opposed. The climate intolerable to one, and easily borne by the other; the distance from which reinforcements must come; and, last of all, the certainty that if the struggle only last long enough to figure in two budgets, John Bull will vote it a bore, and refuse to pay for it. But here am I getting political when I only meant to be personal; and now to

come back, I own that my resolve to go out to India has been aided by hearing that Loyd, of whom I spoke in my last, is to leave by the next mail, and will take passage on board the P. and O. steamer Leander, due at Malta on the 22nd. My intention is to be his fellow-traveller, and with this resolve I shall take the Austrian steamer to Corfu, and come up with my friend at Alexandria. You will perhaps be puzzled to know why the claims of friendship are so strong upon me at such a moment, and I satisfy your most natural curiosity by stating that this is a mission of torture. I travel with this man to insult and to outrage him; to expose him in public places, and to confront him at all times. I mean that this overland journey should be to him for his life long the reminiscence of a pilgrimage of such martyrdom as few have passed through, and I have the vanity to believe that not many men have higher or more varied gifts for such a mission than myself. My first task on reaching Calcutta shall be to report progress to you.

"I don't mind exposing a weakness to an old friend, and so I own to you I fell in love here. The girl had the obduracy and wrong-headedness not to yield to my suit, and so I had no choice left me but to persist in it. I know, however, that if I could only remain here a fortnight longer I should secure the inestimable triumph of rendering both of us miserable for life! Yes, Drayton, that pale girl and her paltry fifteen thousand pounds might have spoiled one of the grandest careers that ever adorned history! and lost the world the marvellous origin, rise, progress, and completion of the dynasty of the great English Begum Calvert in Bengal. Count upon me for high office whenever penny-a-lining fails you, and, if my realm be taxable, you shall be my Chancellor of the Exchequer!

"You are right about that business at Basle; to keep up a controversy would be to invest it with more interest for public gossip. Drop it, therefore, and the world will drop it; and, take my word for it, I'll give them something more to say of me one of these days than that my hair-trigger was too sensitive! I'm writing this in the most romantic of spots. The moonlight is sleeping—isn't that the conventional?—over the olive plain, and the small silvery leaves are glittering in its pale light. Up the great Alps, amongst the deep crevasses, a fitful flashing of lightning promises heat for the morrow; a nightingale sings close to my window; and through the muslin curtain of another casement I can see a figure pass and repass, and even distinguish that her long hair has fallen down, and floats loosely over neck and shoulders. How pleasantly I might linger on here, 'My duns forgetting, by my duns forgot.' How smoothly I might float down the stream of life, without even having to pull an oar! How delightfully domestic and innocent and inglorious the whole thing! Isn't it tempting, you dog? Does it not touch even *your* temperament through its thick hide of worldliness? And I believe in my heart it is all feasible, all to be done.

"I have just tossed up for it. Head for India, and head it is! So that Loyd is booked for a pleasant journey, and I start to-morrow, to ensure him all the happiness in my power to confer. For the present, it would be as well to tell all anxious and inquiring friends, into which category come tailors, bootmakers, jewellers, &c., that it will be a postal economy not to address Mr. Harry Calvert in any European capital, and to let the 'bills lie on the table,' and be read this day six years, but add, that if properly treated by fortune, I mean to acquit my debts to them one of these days.

"That I 'wish they may get it' is, therefore, no scornful or derisive hope of your friend,

"H. CALVERT.

"If—not a likely matter—anything occurs worth mention, you shall have a line from me from Venice."

When he had concluded his letter, he extinguished his candles, and sat down at the open window. The moon had gone down, and, though star-lit, the night was dark. The window in the other wing of the villa, at which he had seen the figure through the curtain, was now thrown open, and he could see that Florence, with a shawl wrapped round her, was leaning out, and talking to some one in the garden underneath.

"It is the first time," said a voice he knew to be Emily's, "that I ever made a bouquet in the dark."

"Come up, Milly dearest; the dew is falling heavily. I feel it even here."

"I'll just fasten this rose I have here in his hat; he saw it in my hair to-night, and he'll remember it."

She left the garden, the window was closed. The light was put out, and all was silent.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXVII. AN ABBÉ.

LILY went into the cabinet of Mademoiselle Marcassin a young lady pupil at a boarding-school. The social status was not a very dignified one; but, at all events, it was something. The profound gentlemen who compile the census-tables would have thought Lily worthy to be registered as a single item in the educational schedule. She entered the cabinet a school-girl. She came out of it a hybrid creature, something between a servant-of-all-work and a galley-slave.

Mademoiselle Marcassin kept her word to her, after a fashion. Lily was fed, lodged, and clothed, after a fashion. That is to say, she was privileged, after the pupils had fed, to consume the scraps of their repast—her refectory not being the common dining-room, but a side-place, half pantry, half store-room, where not only the copy-books, slates, drawing materials, and such-like, required by the young ladies, were kept in stock; but likewise sacks of lentils and haricot-beans, and large jars full of the peculiarly nasty stewed pears which were unchangeably served at the conclusion of the principal meal under the generic title of "dessert."

She was lodged—but not in any of the dormitories. She had a room to herself (a hole rather) in the roof, where she had a mattress on the floor, and an ewer and basin on a rush-bottomed chair. The Marcassin was too rigorously just, to suffer her to share in the sleeping accommodation provided for pupils who paid; the Marcassin was too kind, after a fashion, to degrade her by forcing her to associate with the other servants. She was clothed, too, was Lily, after a fashion. Cast-off garments, mostly of the rag-and-tatter description, were flung to her from time to time, to be mended and cobbled together, when her own rags gave signs of dropping off piecemeal.

She was permitted to pursue her studies, after a fashion. When there was no particular slavery in hand, she was suffered to sit in the class and listen to the lessons. Neither bad marks nor good marks were given her. She was beyond these. If she, alone of a class, could answer a question, she was not privileged to take her competitors up. She remained, for good or evil, at the bottom.

She helped about the house. She cleaned knives sometimes. She combed the younger children's hair. Sometimes she made beds. She never scrubbed—for the scrubbing-brush was an institution unknown to the Pension Marcassin. In French housekeeping there is a tradition that dry polishing is a holy thing, but that hot-water does harm. Lily's special task-work, however, was in the lingerie, or wardrobe of the school. She passed many hours there every evening. There was always an immensity of mending to do, and most of it fell to her lot. As she was not allowed to touch the piano, for fear of wearing out the keys; or to draw, because crayons cost money, or to write, because paper and slate pencil are expensive; her fingers might have grown stiff and awkward but for the compulsory lissomness they acquired in that everlasting needlework. She grew to possess astonishing dexterity as a sempstress.

Once a year, all the mattresses in the establishment were ripped up, the wool taken out, and, compressed into cakes as it generally was by continuous pressure, carded, by means of iron teeth set in wooden slabs, into fresh stuff. Two prodigious old women, hoarse voiced and hairy chinned, who looked as though they had been horse-grenadiers in the Imperial Guard who had taken to petticoats in their old age, used to come to card those mattresses. They were paid two francs a day, and their keep. Lily was permitted to help them. The dust and flocculent particles of the wool half choked her, but she carded as well as she could. One of the old women used to bring a stone flask full of corn brandy with her, from which she frequently gurgled into her old mouth what she called "la goutte du bon Dieu." The other would persist in smoking a short pipe in the intervals of labour, much to the disgust of the Marcassin; but the old woman worked cheaply and expeditiously, and so was not denied her narcotic. Lily was dreadfully afraid of both of them. They spat and swore, and were like men.

"I remember," would one of these woolly Chevaliers d'Eon say—"I remember, La Mère Boustifaille, when the little King of Rome used to be wheeled about the Tuileries Gardens

in a little carriage drawn by two Astracan sheep."

"And the Duke of Bordeaux, Ma'me Plumet," would the other say. "Diantre! was he not baptised in water from the Jordan? Do you remember the Terror, Ma'me Plumet?"

"If I remember it? Imbecile! Was I not dancing at the Opera when Messieurs of the Committee sent for me to be one of the nymphs that marched by the side of the car of the Goddess of Reason? Ah! yes, I have not had bad chances in my time," and this she said with a horrible leer at Lily. "I have had cashmeres and diamonds in my time. But I have had misfortunes. It has all been through my devotion to the Emperor. That accursed minister of police would not give me a bureau de tabac because of my sympathies. When I asked for a box-opener's place at the Funambules, they told me that I was a Bonapartist. Why not call me a sorceress at once? And now I am come to carding mattresses at forty sous a day, and my soup. Bah!" And the old woman would expectorate and take another pull at the "goutte du bon Dieu."

They called Lily "c'te jeunesse," and laughed at the clumsy way in which she carded. One of them, La Mère Boustifaille, talked to her one day—it was in her second year of carding—of her beauty, and asked her why she buried herself in that place when she might have cashmeres and diamonds? Lily shuddered as she heard, without comprehending, the hag. Her ears burnt, but her lips were cold. Of all the bad people in this bad world there is nothing, I apprehend, worse than a bad old Frenchwoman.

Lily Floris—"c'te jeunesse"—"la petite Anglaise"—or the "fille de classe Pauline," as she was indifferently called, was fifteen, and shapely, and fair. She thanked God every night in the simple English prayers which had been taught her by Barbara Bunnycastle, that she did not hate any one. She prayed for strength to continue obedient, industrious, and uncomplaining. But hers was a hard time—a very hard time.

To the rest of the school-girls, in the days when they condescended to converse with her, she had been a heretic. They told her that she was doomed to eternal perdition because she did not go to mass and cross herself. They were incredulous as to heretics believing in anything save Satan—and not much in him. As a heretic, she was not allowed to accompany the other girls on Sundays and fête days to the neighbouring church of St. Philippe du Roule. As a heretic, she was necessarily excluded from the periodical catechisings, admonitions, and exhortations, which took place prior to the yearly festival of the First Communion.

There were generally twenty or thirty girls every spring to take this first communion. They looked inexpressibly peaceful, innocent, beautiful, in their white frocks and veils, their snowy wreaths and spotless gloves, their little white silk stockings and shoes, their bouquets of white flowers. Lily used to look after them with longing eyes as they filed through the playground on their way to the entrance-gate. She was sorry that she was a heretic; but was she one, and, if so, was it her fault?

She thought, one day, that she would ask the Abbé Chatain. He was "directeur" of the establishment. He catechised the young ladies, and confessed them, and generally prepared them for the first communion. He was a tall lean ecclesiastic with a bronzed visage, very high cheek-bones, a square jaw, broken teeth, somewhat jaundiced eyes, and iron-grey hair. In his long black soutane, black rabat with white cambric edging, heavy shoes with buckles, flapped hat, and portentous umbrella, he had seemed for years to Lily an awful and forbidding personage. He took a great deal of snuff too, and when he blew his long bassoon-shaped nose with a blue cotton handkerchief, the sound was awful. He had a manner of breathing hard, too, when he spoke, and of screwing up his eyes, and clattering his jagged teeth, the reverse of encouraging. Yet the girls said that the Abbé Chatain was amiable, and forbore to visit the little peccadilloes they acknowledged in confession with any unusually disagreeable penances.

It was a long time before Lily could make up her mind to speak to the abbé. As a heretic, the ecclesiastic kept aloof from her; and she, too, dreaded that her addressing him might be an act open to misconstruction.

One day, however—it was during the August holidays, and the abbé had called to pay a visit of politeness to the Marcassin, who, being indisposed, could not receive him—Lily clothed herself in the full armour of a desperate resolve, and sought him out. The worthy ecclesiastic was pacing up and down the playground, snuffing and waving the blue cotton pocket-handkerchief in a contemplative manner, as usual. One flap of the skirt of his cassock was drawn up, displaying a not unsymmetrical calf, and in this traditional clerical coquetry it may be that the artful arrangement of hooks and strings, known as "ladies' pages," originated.

Lily stole up to the clergyman, and was about to address him; to her dismay, he suddenly produced a book from his pocket. "Alas," she thought, "the abbé is going to say his breviary, and he will be walking up and down the playground for at least twenty minutes without my daring to speak to him, and then, perhaps, Madame, who is lying down, will awake, and the abbé will be called in, and my chance will be gone for ever."

To her relief, however, the book was not a breviary. It was doubtless a devout work, but not of so strictly canonical a nature. Indeed, the doctrine it contained seemed not only of a comforting, but of an exhilarating order, for the abbé, wagging his head approvingly, and following the text with an appreciating forefinger, would ever and anon emit a gleeful chuckle. It was a merry book, and the abbé was no sour ascetic.

"He is a droll of a farceur," murmured the abbé, "this Monsieur de Béranger, although he has written some bitter things against the reverend fathers the Jesuits! What do you want, young girl?" he added suddenly, and throwing, accidentally of course, the hand which held the book behind him, but still keeping the page open with appreciative forefinger.

"If you please Monsieur l'Abbé——" poor Lily began.

"But I do not please," the ecclesiastic rejoined, sharply. "I have nothing to do with you. You are not a catechumen. You do not belong to my class. Go to your minister. I can have nothing to say to you. Enfin, que me voulez-vous."

"Oh! Monsieur l'Abbé, do pray hear me," the girl pleaded, joining her hands, and her eyes beginning to stream, "I am so truly, so miserably unhappy."

"By your own fault, I take it, young girl," remarked the abbé; "the worthy Mademoiselle Marcassin—a true shepherdess to her flock—reports you as being obstinate, rebellious, opinionated, recalcitrant. Kindness and severity have been tried, and both in vain, to you. Go to your minister—are you an Anglican or a Puritan?—and demand of him what prayers and penitence you should resort to, in order to enter into a better frame of mind."

"But I have no minister," cried Lily, despairingly; "I have no friends, I have no home. I am quite alone in the world. I am a poor little English girl, left, abandoned, deserted here by cruel strangers. I am destitute, and an object of charity. I have never been outside these walls for seven years. I strive my best to be good, and to learn, and to work, but I am always punished and made miserable. Oh! I am most wretched and helpless."

"Tiens," muttered the abbé, taking out the blue cotton handkerchief and wringing the bassoon nose, but without the bassonic sonorousness, "this has the appearance of being pitiable."

"Oh, sir; dear, kind Monsieur l'Abbé, if you would only intercede for me; if you would only soften Madame's heart towards me! If I could only be sent back to England, perhaps the good ladies with whom I was at school when a very, very little girl, near London, might know something of my friends."

"It is hardly possible," said the abbé, not unkindly, and shaking his head. "Madame has told me under what circumstances you are here. Perhaps the wicked people who imposed upon her, likewise robbed some mistress of a school là-bas, down there in England, when you were an infant. Have you no other friends that you can remember, however faintly?"

Lily hesitated for a moment. How could she name Cutwig and Co.? Old Mr. Cutwig had given her a new shilling, and Mr. Ranns (on account of the Co.) a Noah's Ark, and 'Melia a kiss; but this acquaintance of two hours' duration could scarcely, with propriety, be called friendship. And then she thought of the braided and whiskered man on board the boat, who had given her "joggolate." Could he be called a friend? Alas! no. Finally, her thoughts reverted to the tall gentleman who had been so kind to her at the Greenwich dinner. She had never forgotten him. A thousand times she had thought of him with gratitude and affection. Many and many a time, pining and shivering in her wretched bedchamber, she had asked herself: "Shall I write to him? He told me his name. It was William—Sir William Long. Shall I write a letter to Monsieur Sir William Long, England, and pray him to come and help the poor little girl he was so kind to, ever so many years ago? But who would post a letter for me? If it were discovered, I should be sent to the cave for a week. And, besides, he has forgotten me. I only amused him for a moment. He is married and happy." And poor Lily, as she thought this, found herself burning with blushes and choking with tears.

No, she could not give the name of Cutwig and Co., nor of the man with the braid and the beard, and a strange shame and nervousness prevented her naming him whom she yet vaguely believed to be her friend. She told the abbé, with dolorous meekness, that she had no friends, so far as she knew, anywhere in the world.

"Pauvre petite!" said the Abbé Chatain, taking out the blue cotton handkerchief again. "What, then, can be done for you?" he resumed, after a brief silence.

Lily could tell him that, and eagerly, too. She had been brooding over and elaborating a feeble little scheme for months. "Oh!" she cried, "if Madame would only be kind and merciful to me, she could make me happy, I am sure, at once. It would not be at all difficult. Thanks to the instruction I have received at the Pension—and oh, pray believe that I am very grateful for it—I know enough, I hope, to undertake the duties of a nursery governess, or at least I could be an under teacher in a village school. Or I would work at my needle, or wait at table, or do housework, or anything, if she would only allow me to leave this dreadful place, and be kind enough not to tell everybody that I am wicked and rebellious."

"You are full of romantic ideas," replied the priest, after cogitating for some moments over Lily's audacious proposition; "but we will hope for the best. Go in peace, my child, and do not cry. I, myself, will speak to Mademoiselle Marcassin on this topic, and we will see what can be done."

He patted Lily gently on the head, and strode away. And the girl returned to her needlework, and, for the first time since Polly Marygold left the Pension Marcassin, a golden ray brought daylight and hope streaming into her soul.

The abbé was as good as his word. An evening or two afterwards, while he was playing his modest game of backgammon with Mademoiselle Marcassin, he took occasion to say, as though inadvertently:

"And the little English girl you have succoured and cherished, how goes it with her?"

An evil look came over the countenance of the schoolmistress. "How goes it? As with a viper. Speak to me of the gratitude of those Islanders. I calculate that I have lost by that little crocodile at least five thousand francs, of which I shall never see a red liard. And yet I have been a second mother to her."

It was certainly something in poor Lily's favour that she had been blessed with a second mother, seeing what a remarkably unsatisfactory investment the first one had proved to be. The abbé, however, received Madame's statement with a pinch of salt, as well as with one of snuff. He knew the Marcassin of old, and was acquainted with her aptitude for magnifying her own merits and depreciating those of others: when she would allow them, which was but seldom, to have any merits at all.

"It is a pity," carelessly remarked the abbé, putting the caster to his chin, as was his wont, before he flung the dice, "that you should be burdened with this little eat-all and do-nothing."

"It is more than a pity, it is a shame, a scandal, an enormity, an abomination," Madame indignantly acquiesced. "Figure to yourself, my dear abbé, that this most reprehensible young person of fifteen years of age—well grown, too—devours my substance. She devours the little patrimony which I hope to be able to leave, some day, to my kindred in Touraine. Such a great girl is not to be kept on walnut-peelings."

"That is easy to see," the diplomatic abbé agreed.

"They may keep her who will," the schoolmistress continued, with well-simulated indifference. "I am sick of the charge, and should be enchanted to be relieved from it."

"Would you, then, consent to her departure?"

"Who would pay me my memoirs, if you please?" the Marcassin returned quickly.

"But if you have lost, as you say you have lost by this time, all hopes of payment?"

"That is true," returned Madame, shrugging her shoulders. "As well fish in the canal for whales as expect that I shall ever re-enter into my funds."

"And if you placed this embarrassing young creature in some locality of which you were well assured, and with persons at whose hands you could at any time claim her?"

"That is true; but how to find such a locality and such persons?"

"They must be numerous. Could you not obtain a situation for her in a school; half as pupil teacher, half as fille de peine?"

"She is that already, here; more of one than the other." Mademoiselle did not specify which was the "one" and which the "other."

"And the convent?"

"Impossible. She is a heretic. The government is infidel and Voltairean. We should have complications with the police."

"But you say that she has no papers, no recognised identity."

"I tell you, abbé," exclaimed the Marcassin, "that she has nothing, save the spirit of the Fiend which animates her. She is as friendless as a mountebank's tumbling child, bought for forty sous at a fair, and passed on from one juggler to another."

"Pauvre petite!" murmured the abbé again; but his voice was pitched low.

"Besides," resumed the schoolmistress, "if she went to another school, she might chatter—and——"

She stopped, somewhat confused, and, the game being over, hurriedly closed the backgammon-board.

"I understand you," the abbé returned, with a nod. "There is much rivalry in the scholastic profession. One always tries to do one's neighbour — when one's neighbour keeps a school — as much harm as is possible. 'Tis pity, for charity's sake, that it should be so. But suppose, my dear and worthy lady, that I was enabled to find, out of doors, an asylum for this forlorn child—a safe asylum, a respectable asylum, a discreet asylum—whence, from time to time, I should be enabled to bring you news of her, and whence, if the dishonest persons who have defrauded you of your hard-earned money were ever brought back to better sentiments, and showed a wish to make restitution, you could bring her back. Suppose some such scheme to be within my power of putting quickly into execution?"

"Then, my dear abbé, I should say at once, Take her."

"Is that your determination?"

"You have my word for it."

"Then we will adopt measures in accordance. I shall have the honour shortly of communicating with you on the subject. Not another cup of tea, I assure you. I have fears for my head. Well, qualified with this excellent and sanative rhum of the colonies. Have you tasted the Chocolat de Santé, my dear lady? And the Racahout des Arabes? No; you prefer the Pâte Regnault. A thousand wishes for your happiness! We will consider the affair of la petite as arranged. Figure to yourself this Monsieur Véron, who makes one fortune by managing the Opera House—what a scandal—and another by selling cough lozenges. And yet, I am told, a most excellent person, and devoted to the Church. Yes, I will certainly remember to bring the six numbers of the Gazette de France when next I have the honour. One might get the little wardrobe of la petite together. She has none, you say. Well, one must be found for her. Charity is not dead, as you, mademoiselle, have so triumphantly proved. Once more, dear lady, good night!"

These remarks were not delivered without a solution of continuity. The abbé's valedictory observations were scattered about the room. He had to swallow another cup of the curious fluid

which Mademoiselle Marcassin imagined, with many other French ladies of that period, to be tea. He yielded to friendly compulsion, and partook of another modicum of the colonial liqueur. Then he had to find his umbrella and his shovel-hat, and to press Madame's hand, and to bow over it, and to accept some jujubes for his poor cough, and to suffer Madame with her own fair hands—literally fair, but not cruel, to him—to tie a woollen scarf round his neck, as a defence against the night air.

It was all as innocent, I speak without mental reservation, as sheep-shearing in Arcadia. Nothing could come of it. Both were stricken in years. On both, the doom of perpetual celibacy weighed: he, enforced to it by vows: she, sentenced to it by circumstances and by temperament. Yet I have heard that the sun shines sometimes at the North Pole; and I believe that a little flirtation *is* a little flirtation all the world over. Believe me, had the fiend who tempted the good St. Anthony come to him, not in the guise of a ballet-girl, but as a cozy comfortable spinster of a certain age—a spinster who would have knitted muffatees, and made wine possets, and warmed his slippers, and cut the leaves of his Tablet for him—the hermit would earlier have turned his eyes upward from his tome.

One sigh—one among a thousand frowns—is not many. Mademoiselle Marcassin gave one sigh, and put away the backgammon-board and the rhum of the colonies.

"Pauvre cher homme," sighed the Marcassin; and then she froze up again in one block, and proceeded to make her nightly tour of her dormitories, scattering bad marks about her on all the pupils who could be proved to be awake. For wakefulness was considered presumptive evidence of the offender having been indulging in prohibited converse.

"A worthy lady, the Dame Marcassin," the Abbé Chatain mused as he sped homeward. "She errs a little, perhaps, on the side of strictness, but those young persons are difficult, very difficult, to manage. I remember at the seminary what trouble I used to give the proviseur and the régisseur, and what stripes of the discipline these shoulders have suffered. Hi! But it must be admitted that Mademoiselle Marcassin is a woman who has a character. Oh! her force of character is immense. And she is conscientious, highly conscientious. We must see whether we can persuade Madame de Kergolay to shelter this poor little shorn lamb."

And the abbé went home to bed. He was a worthy soul;—although he did sometimes read Béranger's poems on the sly.

"If he had only been on our side, Monsieur de Béranger," the abbé was wont to say, "what an ally he would have been! What a colossus! But it has always been thus. From the days of M. de Pascal, we have never been able to keep the drolls who have wit and humour, on our side. And yet we have educated them all in our seminaries. They have bitten the hand that fed them. If M. de Molière, now, had only written Tartufe against the Huguenots! History of fatality. It is true that we have M. de Chateaubriand—mais il radote—he drivels. That rhum of the colonies was very toothsome. To-morrow is a fat day, and Madame Blaise" (his housekeeper) "has promised me a turkey stuffed with chesnuts. C'est énivrant, that turkey stuffed. A little glass of that rhum of the colonies would make an excellent pousse-café. Ah! here we are at home. Let us enter."

It has been found, not unfrequently, that enforced celibacy leads to a partiality for roast turkey stuffed with chesnuts. Cut a man off from the flesh, and he clings to the flesh-pots.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—MORE OF THE ABBÉ.

A very few days after the interview recorded in the last chapter, the Abbé Chatain had another conversation with Mademoiselle Marcassin. On his departure he met Lily (who had, indeed, tremblingly, but purposely, thrown herself in his way), and, patting her on the head again, told her to be of good cheer, for that a change in her condition was imminent. Lily went, that day, to her needlework, and her knife-cleaning, and her bed-making, quite radiant; and at night, nestling in her shabby pallet, she peopled the Imaginary Land with all kinds of benevolent ecclesiastics and philanthropic protectors.

Her deliverance came upon her with delightful suddenness. According to the abbé, it might be a week or a fortnight before the arrangements that were being made in her behalf could be carried out; but, as her good fortune would have it, the very morning after she had received this hopeful announcement, and as she was sitting, in her usual Cinderella position at the bottom of the class, the Marcassin herself entered the schoolroom in full state, and proclaimed to Mademoiselle Espréménil that Mademoiselle Floris, no longer "la fille Pauline," or "la petite Anglaise," had been "called to other functions."

"Circumstances," the Marcassin took occasion to say, "which did not perhaps imply deliberate culpability on the part of Mademoiselle Floris, had rendered her position one of somewhat a painful nature." Goodness knows, it had, and of the painfullest! "Indeed, she might say that her education and sustenance, her very vestments, in fact, had been provided by a person whom it was unnecessary to name." Here the governesses looked admiringly at the Marcassin; the pupils all stared at Lily; and the poor child herself blushed a deep crimson. "However, this equivocal state of affairs had now come to an end. Thanks to the efforts of a worthy clergyman (digne ecclesiastique), an asylum had been found elsewhere for Mademoiselle Floris. In the new sphere to which she was about to be removed, she would doubtless preserve a lively recollection of the favours and bounty which

had attended her sojourn in the Pension Marcassin."

There were murmurs (rumeurs) of approbation among the scholars; and the head governess remarked, in a low tone:

"If she does not preserve that lively recollection, she is a monster of ingratitude."

"The conduct of Mademoiselle Floris," concluded her benefactress, "had not been entirely free from matter for animadversion. The veil of the past, however, might now be thrown over the anxieties—she might say, the sorrows—she had caused her instructresses. Mademoiselle Floris left that establishment full of the best sentiments; and she, Mademoiselle Marcassin, was glad to recognise that this young person was calculated in every way to do honour to the Pensionnat where she had been sheltered."

The young ladies, most of whom had been for years spectatresses of the daily tasks and punishments inflicted on the scapegoat of the school, and had grown perfectly accustomed to hear her called worthless, insupportable, and incorrigible, by the schoolmistress and her assistants, were not in the least surprised to hear this virtual eulogium pronounced on Lily. It was the Marcassin's way. Nil nisi bonum was her invariable maxim, as applied, not to defunct, but to departing scholars. It was a remarkable fact that no young lady, however refractory or stupid she might have been, ever quitted the academy without a glowing panegyric on her conduct and proficiency. The supreme punishment in the Marcassin's code of pains and penalties was expulsion; but she had only been known to expel one single pupil. The dismission of this culprit took place on the eve of the summer vacation; and it was quite notorious that her parents designed to remove her to another school.

The Abbé Chatain did not come himself as the messenger of Lily's deliverance. The welcome emissary was his housekeeper, Madame Prudence. She was a rosy apple-cheeked old dame, the best cook, and, moreover, the possessor of the best temper, in the quarter. She loved her abbé very dearly, tended him very assiduously, and scolded him sometimes; but that, like the cunning dishes she cooked for him, was all for his good. Madame Prudence was not an admirer of the Pension Marcassin, nor of its energetic proprietor. She spoke of Madame as "cette Mégère." She alluded pointedly to the governesses as "myrmidons of the tyrant." Her opinion regarding the pupils was, that they were oppressed slaves. She had been known to snap her fingers at the entire establishment, in the open playground, and in the light of day. There was an old feud between her and the Marcassin; and she did not, perhaps, altogether approve of ecclesiastics, bound to bachelorhood, being regaled by scholastic spinsters with tea, with backgammon, and with the rhum of the colonies.

The priest's housekeeper, like the schoolmistress, was unmarried; but both were called "Madame," probably from the reason that to a people who had always retained an infinite veneration and deference towards age there seemed something unduly familiar and flighty in the appellation "Mademoiselle." When we were a less civilised, but a better behaved people, we too used to address our spinsters as "Mistress."

On the way from the Pension to her new home—when, to Lily's infinite delight, they traversed on foot the streets of the only city in the world worth living in, with which she had made but ten minutes' acquaintance in the course of seven years—Madame Prudence was pleasantly loquacious, and made no secret of her impression that she had been the immediate means of rescuing Lily from the jaws of a roaring dragon.

"They would have devoured you there, my child," she remarked, patting Lily's arm affectionately as she trotted along by her side. "I know her well, that stiff and starched piece of affected tyranny. Ah! it is I who have given her a bit of my mind. It is not I who am afraid of her. A woman with an ascertained position, quoi!" The last part of these observations Madame Prudence evidently applied to herself; and she as evidently considered the "position" of a priest's housekeeper to be, so far as respectability went, a much better "ascertained" one than that of a schoolmistress.

"And you were very unhappy, eh, my child," she continued, "down in that hole?"

"Oh! dreadfully unhappy," replied Lily. "Many and many a time I could have wished to die, only I knew the wish to be wicked."

"And no wonder. And they were cruel to you?"

"Madame was certainly very strict—almost harsh; but I dare say I was stupid and disagreeable, and gave her much trouble."

"You? I won't believe it for an instant. M. l'Abbé says that you are a little lamb for meekness and resignation. To me you shall be a little angel. The good Madame de Kergolay, whither you are going, has already made up her mind to treat you like a little kitten. Ah! it is there you will dine well, and when you come to dine with the abbé and me, you shall have a taste of *my* cookery; you shall taste la vraie cuisine bourgeoise, my cherished. Are you fond of good dinners?"

"It is so long ago," answered Lily, with a smile, and in involuntary disparagement of the culinary dispensation enjoyed by the inmates of the Pension Marcassin.

"I should think so. *I* know what those crocodiles feed you poor little innocents upon. Haricots, haricots, haricots, all the year round, as if you were mules, and only deserved to be fed upon beans. And the lentils! And the chicory! I would not mind if they knew how to cook them; but they don't, the Cosaques!" A Cossack was Madame Prudence's synonyme for everything that was mean, base, and cruel. "And the wine, or rather the water blushing at being so villanously adulterated! Ah! the good Madame de Ker-

golay will make you taste of the good little vintages. You will be as happy as the day is long. You will help Madame at her embroidery, and sing to her, and read to her, and play her to sleep; and then the abbé will play backgammon with you. I shall not be jealous, ma mignonne, and on Sundays and feast-days I will come to you, and we will go to the mass together."

"I am a Protestant," interposed Lily, gently.

"A Protestant! que' q' c'est qu'ça?" quoth Madame Prudence. "Ah! I know—a Huguenot, a dissident. Well, you must read Monseigneur the Bishop of Meaux upon the Reformists. Ah! the great man Bossuet. And then, my faith, you must go to your temple, and hear your minister. Madame de Kergolay seeks to make no proselytes. Many of her kindred are dissidents. I have known a good many honest folks—très gentils même—who were of the Lutheran profession. M. l'Abbé is Gallican and tolerant. That wicked old giraffe, the Marcassin, is ultramontane, and breathes nothing but sulphur against heretics. She would make a furious grand inquisitor. Voyons! I can't see why Protestants should burn. Le bon Dieu meant nothing to be burned, except candles and wood for the kitchen fire."

Thus sociably chatting, the abbé's housekeeper led Lily through the streets of the only city in the world worth living in. The modest package of clothing which the Marcassin had persuaded herself to part with as the wardrobe of Mademoiselle Floris had been sent on before by a commissionnaire.

A CHRISTIAN PASHA.

The summer of 1863 found me again wandering in Syria. Before turning my face northward, I was anxious to see whether, and how far, the district of Mount Lebanon had recovered from the effects of the dreadful civil war of 1860. The last time I had visited "that goodly mountain," it was my lot to see a whole population reduced to beggary, and more than two hundred villages that had been burnt to ashes.* Mile after mile of what had been cultivated fruitful lands, formed part and parcel of a howling wilderness. I had heard that of late there had been great improvements introduced into the government of Lebanon, and being much interested in this land, I wished to see and judge for myself.

The route from Beyrout to Beit-ed-Deen has been described before.† This time, I started armed with a letter of introduction from the English consul-general at the former place, to Daoud Pasha, the new Ottoman governor-general of Lebanon, who resides at the ancient feudal castle of Beit-ed-Deen, and which has also been before described in the pages of this periodical. I have called Daoud Pasha the "Ottoman" governor-general, because it seems almost a contradiction in terms to designate a Christian as the "Turkish" governor-general, and this functionary is by birth, education, and practice, a Christian, being a member of the Armenian Catholic Church. Daoud Pasha may, for the following reason, in fact, be termed "a compromise." After the dreadful massacres of 1860, the five Great Powers sent each a commissioner to Beyrout to regulate the future government of Syria in general, and of Mount Lebanon in particular. These commissioners had a sixth—the commissioner of the Porte—added to their number. Three of the Powers—France, Russia, and Prussia—insisted upon the future government of Lebanon being entrusted to one of the native Christian princes of the mountain; whereas the other three—England, Austria, and Turkey—were as determined that it should be ruled by a governor named by the Porte. At last a compromise was effected, and it was agreed that the governor-general of Mount Lebanon should be a Christian, nominated by the Sultan. Daoud Pasha is the first Christian ever raised to the rank of mouchir—pasha of the third, or highest grade, corresponding in rank with a field-marshal of the army; and the very fact of the Porte having set aside the old-established landmarks of Moslem bigotry, in this instance, bespeaks a hopeful future for Turkey.

Quick travelling in the East is a simple impossibility. From Beyrout to Beit-ed-Deen is but a distance of some twenty-eight miles, yet it took us two days to get over the ground. We might, it is true, have accomplished the journey in one very long day; but when going over a mountainous country it is out of the question to ride faster than at a foot pace, scrambling up and sliding down steep hills at the rate of four miles an hour. By the time the rider has been four hours in the saddle, both he and the animal which carries him have had quite enough exercise for one day.

Three hours' ride brought us to the village of Shemlin, on the summit of the first range of Mount Lebanon, and commanding one of the most beautiful views in the world. Shemlin may be almost termed an English village, inasmuch as the greater inhabitants are more or less belonging to English institutions, and the three only good houses in the place belong to English people. The first of these, the large silk factory of Mr. S., employs upwards of a hundred and fifty natives. There is a large school for native girls, supported by a ladies' society in London, presided over by an English lady, with three English lady-assistants, and doing a vast deal of good in Mount Lebanon. Lastly, there is the country-house of an English merchant of Beyrout, who, together with the owner of the silk factory, must be long remembered for unbounded hospitality by every English traveller in Syria.

After spending the night in Shemlin, and partaking of a regular English breakfast in

* See After the Lebanon Massacres, No. 110, All the Year Round.

† See A Lebanon Sheik, No. 3, All the Year Round.

the morning, we—the "we" consisting of myself and an English naval officer, whose ship was then stationed at Beyrout—we had first to descend, for about an hour, into the deep ravine which separates the first from the second ridge of Lebanon, and had then to ascend the second ridge for nearly an hour and a half. This brought us to the town of Dheir-el-Kammar, which had been burnt down and utterly destroyed during the civil war of 1860, but which had, when we visited it, been entirely rebuilt by the Turkish government. Neither in the country we had gone through on the previous day, nor in that we now traversed, were there any signs of the fearful tragedy which had deluged the land in blood three short years ago. The villages were all built up again, the people were engaged in their daily labour, and the long strings of laden mules we encountered every few minutes, proved that there was no small amount of traffic going on throughout Lebanon. A pleasant ride of four hours brought us to the gates of Beit-ed-Deen, where, having sent in our note of introduction, we were at once ushered in to Daoud Pasha.

His excellency received us most kindly, greeting us in English, which he speaks well, though he was evidently out of practice. He told us that a letter of introduction was quite unnecessary, as he was always glad to see travellers, and that Englishmen were always welcome. "By the way," he said, "I have an English officer attached to my staff;" and then, clapping his hands to summon a servant, he told the latter to go and call "Something Beg"—I did not catch the first word, but the title of Beg is one always given in Turkey to officers holding the rank of colonel or lieutenant-colonel, or to civil servants of corresponding rank. In a few minutes, there arrived a tall stout-built officer, whose blue eyes and tawny beard announced him at once, in spite of his red fez and Turkish uniform, to be an Anglo-Saxon.

To our surprise, the rooms we were shown to were furnished with every possible comfort; they were a complete contrast to the miserable hotel apartments in which we had roughed it during our stay in Beyrout. We had easy-chairs that were really easy, basins to wash in of English proportions, beds which looked so clean that they almost tempted us to undress and turn in at once. By the time we had washed our hands and got rid of a little of the dust of the journey, a bell summoned us to table, where we found the pasha with the rest of the party assembled. We sat down eight to breakfast.

I never sat down to table with a more pleasant party, nor did I ever partake of a better meal. Daoud Pasha is a man who has seen a great deal of the world, and has travelled much in Germany, France, and England. He appeared to be wholly wrapped up in his work of pacifying the wild mountaineers of Lebanon, and putting a stop to the sectarian quarrels among them which had often caused such rivers of blood to flow. He told us that when first sent from Constantinople, in the summer of 1861, to take charge of the Lebanon, the difficulties of ever introducing anything like order or respect for either person or property, into the mountain, seemed really insurmountable, but that he was happy to say his work was not without fruit at last. "That gentleman is my catcher of murderers, thieves, and rascals," said he, laughing, and pointing to the English officer who sat next me; "and this gentleman," pointing to the officer in French uniform, "is he who prepares the policemen with which to catch the evil-doers. I never have," he continued, "spared, and never will spare, a murderer. If he is convicted by the tribunal on positive evidence of having killed a fellow-creature, I invariably hang him. Capital punishment is the only thing these people fear."

Our breakfast—which was more of a dinner than a breakfast—lasted a considerable time. The pasha had a very good cook. On the table were fruit, olives, sardines, anchovies, and pickles. Each dish, as it was brought to table, was handed round by a servant, à la Russe. For wine, we had some of the gold-coloured dry vintage of Lebanon, the once celebrated vino d'oro, formerly very highly prized all over Europe, and equal to excellent sherry. There was also some good light French claret. After dinner, coffee, such as you can only get in the East—and only in the wealthy houses of the East—was served round, together with cigarettes made with Latakia tobacco, of a quality only to be found in Syria, and not in every part even of that province, though it grows there. When we had all smoked and chatted for half an hour, the different members of the pasha's staff began to withdraw to their various offices. The pasha said to us, "I shall not stand on ceremony with you; your countryman here," pointing to the English officer, "will act as guest-master for me, and show you everything that is to be seen."

The palace of Beit-ed-Deen is erected in the most picturesque situation it has ever been my lot to see in any country. From three of the four sides of the castle, you look straight down some four hundred feet into three different ravines, one more wildly beautiful than another. The gardens of the place were once magnificent, but, during the twenty years when it served as a barrack for Turkish troops, these, like everything else, have been allowed to go to ruin. The builder of Beit-ed-Deen was the Emeer Beshie, the celebrated chief who was banished from Syria in 1840, when the country was taken from the Egyptians. The emeer—the word emeer means prince, and this emeer, though he and all his relations had turned Christians, was of the family of Shehâb, which traces its pedigree to Mahomet—was upwards of fifty years building this castle. Style or symmetry there is none whatever. It was put up piecemeal, court being added to court, hall to hall, and room to room, just as each might be wanted. Yet, taken as a whole, there is, perhaps, no place in the world which pleases the eye

more from its very novelty. The scene in the different court-yards had a strange mixture of the Oriental and the feudal. I could easily imagine the counterpart of what I saw at Beit-ed-Deen, as taking place some seven hundred years ago, in one of the castles built and inhabited by the Crusaders when in Palestine. Christians, Druses, and Moslems, monks, sheiks, emeers, and peasants, crowded the various halls, passages, and courts: either waiting for an audience with the pasha, or some other functionary, or attending as witnesses, plaintiffs, or defendants, on the various tribunals of justice. There must have been several hundred people about the place, no two of whom seemed dressed alike, nearly all being armed, and the brightest colours predominating in all their costumes. Our progress through the crowd was slow, for each man present stopped our guide, the English officer, to salute him and say a few words. The "English. Beg," as they called him, seemed a favourite with every one. As a matter of course, nearly every man in the crowd was smoking. The most wealthy chiefs, or others who had pipe-bearers and attendants with them, smoked either long chiboques, or the more complicated narghilé—water pipes; the poorer men chiefly contented themselves with cigarettes, of which they smoked one, and at the same time rolled up another to take its place when finished. I was particularly struck with the courtesy and good breeding of the crowd; most of them had manners which would do honour to a London or Paris drawing-room; yet our guide told us, many of them, during the civil war, had shed blood without mercy. Amongst the Druses there was one venerable-looking old man whose appearance particularly struck me. He had a snow-white beard reaching almost to his waist, and his manners were those of a benevolent church dignitary. He stopped the English officer, and asked after his health with an air of patriarchal anxiety which was quite touching. After leaving him, I asked who he was? "About the most bloodthirsty rascal in Lebanon," said my informant. "He once confessed to me that during the massacre of Dheir-el-Kammar he had, with his own hand, murdered thirty unarmed men in cold blood."

Our guide took us up to where the courts of justice were sitting. When we entered the law court, the members, or judges, all rose and salaamed to us, inviting our guide and his friends to a seat upon what in England would be termed "the bench." The judges of this court are twelve in number. There are in the mountain three Christian, and three non-Christian sects. The former comprise the Maronites, the members of the Orthodox Greek Church, and the Greek Catholics; the latter include Druses, Moslems, and Metualis. Each of these communities nominate two judges for the criminal court of the mountain, and two for the civil court, besides a wukeel, or agent, who looks after the affairs of his "nation"—in Lebanon each religious community is called "a nation"—at the head-quarters of the pasha. Besides these six different "nations," the Protestant community is now recognised in Mount Lebanon as a distinct religious body, thanks to the exertions of Lord Dufferin when he was British commissioner in Syria after the massacres of 1860. The Protestants are few—numbering not more than a thousand souls—but, whenever one of this community has a law-suit before the tribunals, the Protestant judge has a seat on the bench.

The law court into which we were first shown was that in which criminal cases are tried. The twelve judges seemed to perform the functions of jurymen as well as judges. The proceedings were all in Arabic, the language of the country. As a matter of course, the whole affair was very Oriental in its characteristics, and—to our European eyes—highly irregular. Thus, of the twelve judges ten were smoking—some, long chiboques; others, cigarettes; one or two narghilés. A young man accused of theft was talking to one of the casual bystanders in the court, while both the policemen who guarded him were indulging in cigarettes, as was also a person who seemed to perform the functions of clerk of the court. The judges all sat on a divan with their legs tucked under them, and—like every one else in the court—each seemed to make up for the inactivity of his body by the incessant movement of his tongue. A young native who spoke French very well, translated the proceedings to us. Though not, perhaps, administered according to European notions, there was evidently a fair amount of rough justice in the trial, and the judges appeared anxious to do what was right. The judges have an immense fear of the pasha, who punishes most severely anything like corruption or injustice on the part of any functionaries.

We did not wait to see the end of the trial, but proceeded to visit the barracks of the police corps, which Daoud Pasha had recently organised for the service of the mountain. Like everything else in Lebanon, the chief difficulty connected with this corps is the difference of creeds among the individuals that compose the regiment. The six sects agree in one article of faith; and that is, each man, woman, or child, hates, distrusts, and would, if possible, murder and destroy, all who profess a different creed. This is the reason why Daoud Pasha employs so many foreigners in the service of the mountain. If the superior officers of his police corps were natives, it is only the natives of the same sect that would obey their leaders. If he were a Christian, the non-Christians would not obey him; if he were a Moslem, the Christians would immediately cry out that they are being persecuted. And so on throughout the various sects. In the police corps we saw, there were no fewer than three foreign commissioned and five non-commissioned officers. The chief instructor, or drill-master, was a French captain of infantry, who had been lent for a time by his own government to the governor-general of Lebanon, in order to drill and form the regi-

ment. There was also an Hungarian officer, belonging to the Turkish army, who had charge of the mounted portion of the corps. And lastly there was our guide, the "English Beg," who seemed to be a sort of Sir Richard Mayne.

The police corps of Lebanon is composed of two-thirds Christians and one-third non-Christians. There are among them about one hundred mounted, and four hundred infantry policemen. Besides the Europeans attached to the force, there are native captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and corporals. The horsemen are paid about three English pounds a month, out of which they must feed themselves and keep their horses; the latter being their own property. Remounts are paid for—a fixed sum—by the government. The horses did not appear to be very good, and were all in poor condition. The mounted men were well and suitably dressed, but very ill armed. Their clothing was made in the Zouave fashion, open jacket and waistcoat of a dull red coloured cloth, trimmed with black braid; large dark trousers, something like English knickerbockers; red Turkish boots, and the fez cap. In the way of arms, the swords of the mounted police were good. Each man, we were told, brought with him his own sabre, the weapon to which all natives of Syria are accustomed from their childhood, and which they are taught to use in early years. But their fire-arms were detestable, consisting of a long heavy French infantry musket, carried by a sling behind the shoulder, which to a mounted man must be an utter impossibility. The troops were at drill, under a French sergeant, when we entered their parade-ground, and they went through some of the more simple manœuvres in a very creditable manner.

The dismounted, or infantry, police corps was also at drill. The men of this small battalion—about four hundred strong—were clad in dark blue uniform made Zouave fashion, and trimmed with red braid. They were exceedingly well armed with French Minié rifles and sword bayonets. Both individually, and in a body, these men looked much more serviceable, much more workmanlike, than the mounted police. They were being drilled by a French sergeant of chasseurs-à-pied, the French captain looking on and superintending the parade. I was surprised to see how well they moved in column and line, and how cleverly they handled their arms, considering the very short time—about four months—they had been under instruction as regular troops. Their native captains and subalterns seemed to understand their work thoroughly; and, although the men were put through some complicated movements, very few mistakes were made. There were also four or five native buglers, who sounded the French calls upon French bugles. The words of command were given in Arabic, into which language the whole of the French drill-book, we were told, had been translated by the French officer who instructed the police corps. Each individual foot police soldier is paid about one pound sterling a month, out of which he has to feed himself.

About half an hour before sunset, a messenger came to request we would join the pasha in the garden. There we found his excellency, who, sitting on a chair, and smoking a long chiboque, appeared glad to have got rid of his office work for the day. Near him were several empty seats, placed for our party; pipes were presented to all, and small glasses of raki, intended to serve as a whet before dinner, were handed round; so were small plates of olives, cucumbers, pistachio nuts, and other provocatives. The party was composed of the persons who had met at breakfast—namely, the pasha, his Armenian chaplain, his French private secretary, the English and French officers on his staff, myself and my travelling companion. The conversation was general, and always led by Daoud Pasha, who appeared to think of nothing else in the world but what he called "his mission" to pacify the Lebanon tribes, to introduce order into the country, and to teach the people to honour and fear the laws against those who murder, rob, or use violence.

Shortly after dark, dinner was announced. We sat down to a table which would have done honour to any country gentleman's house in England. After dinner, coffee was served, and, with the coffee, pipes and cigarettes. We retired early; but, before we went, the pasha called my companion and myself aside, and apologised—as he said, in anticipation—for what we should be obliged to see next morning, which was the hanging corpse of a culprit who had been found guilty of a deliberate murder, and had been condemned to death. "I signed his death-warrant this afternoon," said the pasha; "he will be hanged shortly after midnight, and he will be left hanging until noon to-morrow. There is only one place where criminals can be executed, and that is on a tree just outside the gate, so you will see the body hanging to-morrow, which I am very sorry for, but it can't be helped."

They have a curious way of doing things in Turkey. The criminal of whom the pasha had spoken was hanged during the night, and there he was hanging to a tree—his feet barely a yard from the ground—when we got up next morning. The execution had taken place soon after midnight, when all the little world of Beit-ed-Deen was asleep; and no one, except the jailer, the executioner, and their respective assistants, had been present. The culprit did not know for certain that he was to die until about sunset the previous evening, when he was taken out of prison, and left in a room with a priest, who had come to confess him, being a Christian. In the morning, when people got up to their work, there was the corpse swaying gently round every now and then, as the wind moved the tree. It was a horrible sight.

By seven o'clock we were up and dressed, but learned that the pasha had drank his coffee, smoked his pipe, and been at work with his different secretaries, for upwards of an hour.

In fact, early as it was, the whole mountain official hive was already busy. The English officer showed us into his private office, where, with the assistance of two or three clerks, he was opening the despatch bags from all the different parts of Lebanon, as well as from Beyrout. He told us that, about a year previous to our visit, he had by desire of Daoud Pasha organised a regular corps of post runners; by them regular mails, in locked bags, were received every morning from Beyrout, and from the six or eight sub-governors of districts throughout the mountain. Some of these runners had just arrived, covered with dust, while others were preparing to start with the different posts. The postal corps numbers about fifty picked men, most of them Druses, and all models of strength and activity. I never saw so many fine men together at one time. They wore no uniform, but each man had over his right shoulder, and across his heart, a broad shoulder-belt of scarlet cloth, upon which was a brass breastplate, with a different number for every individual. Every man was armed with his own native weapons. The letters were carried in broad wide leather bags, each bag having two keys, of which one was kept by the person in charge of the post at its destination, and the other by our English friend, who had the management of the whole affair, and who, indeed, had organised the system of postal services for Lebanon. Previous to this organisation, serious events often took place in distant parts of the mountain without the central authorities knowing anything of what was going on. But the mere knowledge that the pasha was in daily communication with all parts of the mountain, tended to keep the people in order. It should be remembered that Lebanon is not a mountain, but a mountain chain, some hundred and twenty miles long, by from fifteen to twenty broad, and intersected by innumerable valleys and ravines, many of them three and four thousand feet deep; that the roads are mere bridle-paths, narrow and close to deep precipices; that the population are always in a state of chronic civil war—sect against sect, and village against village—fighting with each other, and more or less with the authorities.

The pasha had invited us to accompany him to the village of Abeigh, some three hours distant. At this place there was to be an assembly of all the Druse chiefs, and many thousands of the Druse people; for the pasha was going to open a college, or high school, for pupils of that creed. We started about nine o'clock, with all the numerous following of a Turkish pasha. As we passed through different villages, the people came out in holiday garb to salute the governor-general, the women throwing rose-water upon us as we passed, and greeting the cavalcade with a singular shrill cry, which is only used at weddings or on other festive occasions. Every few miles some mountain chief with his followers rode out to meet us, and, after saluting the pasha, followed in the rear of the escort, so that by the time we reached the village of Abeigh, the party had increased to several hundred people. At Abeigh we dismounted at the Italian Capuccino convent, a Roman Catholic missionary establishment some two hundred years old, in which two Italian monks live and preach in Arabic to the Christians of the surrounding villages. Here, rooms had been prepared for the pasha and his immediate suite. The hospitable American missionaries who live in the same village, invited my companion and myself to put up at their house for the night, which we were glad to do.

Next morning, by six o'clock, the whole place was on foot to meet the pasha at the institution he was about to open. Far and near the hill-sides seemed alive with people. In every direction armed and mounted chiefs, attired in their gayest gold-embroidered jackets, mounted on their best Arab mares, and followed by their armed retainers, hurried towards the open space of ground in front of the Druse College. At seven o'clock the pasha himself appeared, walking up from the convent, accompanied only by the English and the Hungarian officers, and followed by a couple of dismounted police orderlies. The ceremony itself was nothing remarkable; it consisted merely in the reading out, by one of the pasha's secretaries, of the charter in Arabic, granted to the institution. The pasha then made a very excellent speech in French, which was translated, sentence by sentence, to the assembled multitude, by his excellency's dragoman. For the pasha himself speaks very little Arabic, and in Lebanon there are many more people who understand French than Turkish.

It would appear that the institution is not to be supported in any way by government, but that Daoud Pasha has obtained such an influence over these wild mountain Druse chiefs that he has persuaded their religious sheiks, or chiefs, to devote a large portion of their "Wacoof," revenues derived from lands belonging to the Druse temples, towards building and endowing this educational establishment. I was surprised to find that English is the only language besides Arabic taught in the college, and that many of the pupils—though they had only been learning it about six months—could already speak and read English pretty well. This is owing to the master having been a pupil of the American Missionary College on Lebanon, and having acquired a fair knowledge of English. Moreover, the Druses are fond of the Anglo-Saxon race, and look upon us in the light of tried friends, regarding the French as their natural enemies.

When the ceremony of the opening was over, the feast commenced, and was a wholesale affair. For the pasha, his personal staff, us his guests, and the Italian monks and American missionaries—in all about two dozen individuals—a table apart was spread, served in the European fashion. But for the world at large—chiefs, priests, monks, retainers of chiefs, soldiers, police, grooms, servants, and peasants—eatables were furnished by the ton and the cart-load. Between five and six thousand people

fed that day as guests of the college. There were upwards of fifty sheep roasted whole and stuffed with rice, while of pillaf—rice boiled in butter—there were brought to the ground many huge full caldrons—in each of which a man could have stood upright with ease; and of bread—Arab round cakes—there must have been some forty mule-loads. There was no scrambling or confusion. The multitude was divided off into fifty parties, twenty men in each party. In the middle of each twenty was placed a roasted sheep, a mountain of rice pillaf, and a mule-load of bread. Each man pulled out his knife, and ejaculating, "In the name of God!" began to eat. When he had eaten enough—and Arabs eat fast—he put up his knife with a "God be praised!" rose up from the ground where he had been sitting cross-legged, and one of the bystanders immediately took his place. In less than an hour the whole multitude had eaten, and were smoking their pipes under the shadow of the trees, while of the huge amount of provender it would have puzzled any one to find enough to breakfast a poodle dog. Such a huge meal, so quickly consumed with complete order, it has never been my fate to see.

In the course of the afternoon Daoud Pasha prepared to return to Beit-ed-Deen. He pressed our party to accompany him, but our time was short, and we could not avail ourselves of his hospitality. As he started to return home, we turned our faces down the mountain towards the sea and Beyrout.

A BEATEN ARMY.

We have struck our last blow, we have spent our last shot, now,
And we pour here, in protest, the last drops of life.
All, save man's honest right, we have lost, they have got, now,
And theirs is the triumph where ours was the strife.

Ours the blood on the bastion: our foeman's the flag there:
His the soil of our birth: ours the graves he insults:
And our brave dead are mute while their murderers brag there,
Of crimes praised on earth for successful results.

Here, where heroes are vanquisht, where cravens are victors,
Where the Wronger's the Judge, Truth appeals unto God;
While Justice, preceded no more by her lictors,
Is, herself, now pursued by the axe and the rod.

Be it so! though right trampled be counted for wrong,
And that pass for right which is evil victorious,
Here, where Virtue is feeble, and Villany strong,
'Tis a *cause*, not the *fate* of a cause, should be glorious.

Earth's success, at the purest, with stain of the earthy
Leaves the white worth of Truth, where it touches it, less:
But worth has success in the cause that's unworthy?
We have fail'd? Be it so! We are pure of success.

And so Earth puts upon us no claim to diminish
Our claim upon God, which is perfected thus.
Here our least gain begins, where their greatest must finish:
Earth's gains claiming them, God's debt owing to us!

Graves are better than crowns thus. Oh ever and ever
This bartering Eternity's birthright to Time!
God, we give thee unblemisht our frustrate endeavour:
Earth, we leave thee unchallenged Hell's Triumph, man's crime!

ON CIRCUIT.

We have received the following from a trustworthy correspondent:

Sir. There are few evils harder to bear than those which we know for certain that a future age will be free from: grievances, the result of some preposterous system which must go to the wall sooner or later, and which might just as well go there at once. It seems such a pity that those things which everybody wants done, and which everybody knows will be done some day, should not be done now. Everybody knows that the Papacy is doomed, yet still the Italians are kept chafing under the inconvenience of a divided kingdom. Everybody knows that the American Union is over for ever, and yet the war goes on. Reform is a plant of slow growth; it is the especial function of the Press to force it. Therefore it is, sir, that, having a reform of some importance to propose, I solicit your aid in bringing it about.

The reform of which I speak, is not one of an altogether public nature. The persons to be benefited by it, form only one class of the community, and represent only a section of society; but, I think, neither a small, nor an unimportant one. To cut short all further preamble, I am ready to shorten the case by admitting at once that I am a barrister. It is a barrister's grievance to which I call attention. I am going to plead for the pleader, and to advocate the cause of the advocate.

You are doubtless aware, sir, that many, many years ago, in that dark period of our history to which allusion is sometimes made as the "good old time," it was the custom of the fraternity which I represent to travel from town to town, when on circuit, either on horseback or in private carriages, while the attorneys who attended the circuit made use of public conveyances to carry them from place to place. It is needless to say that in these days of railroads there is an end of this arrangement. The same train conveys the barrister and the attorney each to his destination at the assize town, and they can even travel, if they like, in the same carriage. The reason why these two classes were kept asunder formerly, was, that it was apprehended that they

might, if brought into the intimate contact which travelling together implies, fall into such discussions concerning the cases about to be tried, as might prove contrary to the laws of that professional etiquette which regulates what should and what should not be the nature of the intercourse between solicitor and advocate. In a word, it was found that such association might lead to what are stigmatised as "unprofessional practices."

Of course, as it had been determined by those who have the ordering of such matters, that the attorney and barrister should not travel together from one town to another, it was not likely that the two classes should be allowed to reside together when the journey's end was attained. Accordingly, it was arranged as a regulation which was on no account to be infringed, that when the attorney arrived at his destination, he was to take up his abode at the inn, while the barrister was to provide himself with private lodgings in the town. Inns were not (as a rule) so comfortable in the days when this arrangement was made as they are now, and it is to be supposed that the barrister had, generally speaking, the best of it.

Now, these two regulations, which bind the barrister, first, to travel by a different conveyance from that used by the attorney, and secondly, to adopt a different place of abode from that which the attorney makes use of, should surely stand or fall together. If one of them be binding, the other should be also. Unfortunately, nobody seems to see the thing in this light; at any rate, no one attempts to remedy the inconsistency that though the barrister and the attorney travel together in the same conveyance from London to York, they may not both put up at the same hotel when they get there. Surely this is an illogical state of things, unworthy of a profession which "goes in" for close reasoning.

The inconvenience arising from a strict adherence to this law which forbids the attorney and the barrister to inhabit the same house is very great, and falls heavily on the latter. Not only is it more convenient, when a short residence only is contemplated, to take up one's abode at an establishment intended for the use of travellers, but it is, of course, less expensive. The attorney has the advantage of the barrister in every way. He not only arrives at a well-lighted, cheerful-looking house where everything is organised expressly with a view to the traveller's convenience, and where he has only to ring a bell to have all his wants supplied—not only has he all these advantages, but he pays less for them. Those dingy lodgings to which the barrister is consigned when he arrives at the assize town, are not only dingy but very expensive: for the simple reason that it is necessary they should be kept vacant when he does not want them, in order that they may be available for his use when he does want them. It is not the lodging-house-keeper who is to blame here, but the system. Of course the lodgings must be paid for, and if the owner of the lodgings fails of obtaining a permanent tenant, because at certain seasons he expects an occasional tenant, it is not surprising that he should expect remunerative compensation for the loss he sustains. It is inexpressibly annoying to reach some town where one knows there is a particularly good hotel, and to see the attorneys walking off to their comfortable quarters, while you, the barrister, betake yourself to those gloomy apartments over the chemist's which are regularly reserved for your use.

Yes, you repair with a sinking heart, to your bedroom first, to seek some refreshment after your long journey, and you find that the water supply is on the old niggardly scale, and that the large ewer and basin which they promised you on the occasion of your last visit has not been supplied. And then sitting down upon the side of the bed—which every man who is worth twopence always does when he wipes his hands—you find that that infernal feather-bed has come to the surface once again, and is softer, too, than ever. Is it not astounding how slowly reform advances in this country? For at least a score of years feather-beds have been denounced by everybody, and yet there they still are flourishing in almost every lodging-house in England. With how little hope it is that when looking for apartments you advance to the bed and administer the great punch test. In goes your fist into the horrid soft mass just as you expected.

With what wonderful establishments has this dire regulation, of which I am complaining, made me acquainted! My experience in the matter of lodgings is enormous, and one result of that experience is, that they are all singularly alike. In all, I have found a circular table, and a cheffonier which emits, on being opened, a composite smell of cooked ham, candles, spirits, and tea-leaves—of general chandlery, in short. And well it may do so, this receptacle having been used by all previous lodgers both as a larder and a store-room. I have found, moreover, that stamped felt is used in most lodgings as a substitute for Brussels carpet, and that shells are in favour as chimney-piece ornaments, though not to the exclusion of white china lambs touched up with gold, and poodle dogs of hideous aspect plunging their muzzles into baskets of petrified shaving-lather representing flowers.

The cookery, again, at one lodging-house is curiously like the cookery at another lodging-house. The eggs are invariably either underdone or hard, the potatoes are watery, and the chops are subjected to some treatment which gives them a *grey* colour when they appear on table: though how they are brought into that unnatural condition is unknown to the present writer.

And then the lodging-house servants: how little variety there is among the different specimens of that noble race! How short they are, and how thick. How dirty are their hands, and how hard they work. It is doubtful whether any

class in the community have so much to do. And then it is the dullest and most uninteresting kind of work. It is executed on the knees, on door-steps, and in front of iron grates, and involves an amount of grovelling among cinders, from which one of the saints would have shrunk, even on Ash Wednesday. Saints, indeed! Are not these real saints? When I see one of these little worthy frights labouring on from early morning to late night, sleeping in a kennel, living upon everybody's leavings, and cheerful from first to last, I ask myself whether such inglorious martyrdom can be spoken of with too much respect, and whether there is not more of glory in the frouzy black cap which surrounds her ill-favoured countenance, than in the brightest nimbus which any church has wreathed about the heads of any conventual saints?

I will say no word, then, in this my protest, disparaging the lodging-house maids-of-all-work: seriously believing that a more sorely tried, and, at the same time, a more patient industrious deserving class of persons, does not exist. But concerning the lodging-house proprietress I have no such scruples. She is a grasping, illiberal, tyrannical, servile humbug, with a shocking and surprising genius for devising new and unheard-of extras. What does she mean by swelling my bill with a charge for boot-cleaning, when the process is executed by Saint Betsy, who gets nothing for it? What does she mean by making me pay for the kitchen-fire, through whose agency my chops are rendered grey in the prime of life, and my meals are destroyed?

But I must ask no more questions on this or any other subject connected with lodgings, having already been betrayed into too long a digression by my indignation at the injustice which drives me away from the Royal Hotel opposite. And then I know so well that there is no need for this to be. I am so perfectly well aware that the object which this arrangement is organised to carry out, is not carried out. During the whole of that long journey from London to York, Mr. Foxey and I may sit in adjoining compartments of the same carriage, and may, if we feel inclined, discuss all the rights and wrongs of that inevitable libel case in which Mr. Pestle, the local practitioner, seeks to recover damages from Mr. Mortar, the practitioner of a neighbouring town, for throwing doubts upon his professional capability and his personal character, calculated to injure his reputation and reduce the amount of his professional income—about this and all sorts of other cases Foxey and I may, if we choose, plot and confabulate and conspire to our hearts' content during the whole of our journey; but the moment we arrive at our journey's end, we must suddenly become strangers to each other!

And then to take the case of those barristers who reside (as some do) in the towns in which the assizes are held. Are not they perpetually on intimate terms with the local attorneys? Are not the two classes in constant intercourse, living in the same small society, and members of the same profession?

Sir, I am at this moment writing from my lodgings in a certain assize town. They are over the hatter's shop. Since I was last here, the hatter, upon that principle of combination which prevails so largely in county-towns, has combined the trunk and portmanteau making business with his former undertakings, and an incessant hammering and tapping sound reaches me in consequence from the lower regions. The chimney of my sitting-room has taken to smoking violently, while the old servant who used to wait upon me, and who knew my ways, has disappeared, and her place is supplied by an individual who not only does not know *my* ways, but appears, from her conduct, to be ignorant of the ways of the whole civilised community. Exactly opposite to my sitting-room window is one of the best and pleasantest hotels in provincial England. Under these circumstances I write in a condition of considerable irritability, which I must plead as my excuse if I have seemed in this letter to dwell with undue force on the grievance under which I am suffering.

Sir, I reiterate my apologies for troubling you at such length about a matter which affects only one class. It is simply under the firm conviction that in making my complaint through the medium of your columns, I have the best chance of getting justice done to it, that I adopt this otherwise roundabout way of appealing to the big-wigs of my bewigged profession.

I am, Sir, with much respect,
Your obedient servant,
CIRCUITUS ROOTS
(Barrister-at-Law).

MEYERBEER—A CHARACTER.

IT is strange, but true, that not a tune by Meyerbeer is on the organs or in the streets;—it is no less true, yet not strange, that he has ruled the musical stage of Europe for the past thirty years as no one has done since Signor Rossini provokingly ceased to write.—Bellini's works have passed, Donizetti's have passed; but "Robert" and "Les Huguenots," in spite of their huge and over-elaborate complication, have got a hold everywhere, and have kept the place which they have got.—A more singular phenomenon in the history of art is not on record.

There is no need here to call back all the particulars of his birth, parentage, and education, to tell how Meyerbeer was born rich among parents devoted to him; how soon he showed a will for music—how soon great technical dexterity; with this a certain indecision in carrying his purposes out—a singular absence of inventiveness, conjointly with a singular persistence.—To illustrate from the history of two Hebrew boys born into rich Berlin families, neither of the two endowed with electric genius:—each of the two resolute to make his way—Mendelssohn wrote, when he was aged only fifteen, works which made an epoch, such as his pianoforte Quartets, and his immortal Shakespeare overture — Meyerbeer, after be-

coming known as pianist, betook himself to the stage, wandered across the Alps from Germany into the Italian theatres (then great theatres), there produced opera after opera, only one of which—"Le Crociato"—survives even in name, and not till he was aged forty asserted any right to catch and to hold the ear of Europe, by the production at Paris of his "Robert le Diable."

It may be "calm and classical," as one Mrs. Jarley put it, to decry the five operas written by Meyerbeer for Paris—nevertheless, they have held Paris fast during thirty years—and before Paris had Meyerbeer Paris had Auber, and had Rossini, with his stupendous second act of "Guillaume Tell."—There can be no doubt that "Robert" is one of the most popular operas of modern times; and yet it is tedious in places—in places chargeable with a desperate frivolity—in places spoiled by unnatural affectation. It cannot be said that it is the mere show of the drama—the delicious device of the dancing dead nuns, which has kept the work alive, and the great cathedral scene in the last act. I have seen it relished in the tiny, barn-like theatres of small German towns; and a curious recollection rises of a performance of this kind at Freiburg, in the Breisgau, on a sweltering summer evening, where the hero, heroine, and Fiend-Father were so fat, besides being very old, that it would have been hardly possible to niche in a fourth character among them, had a quartet been the desideratum,—so narrow was the stage.—The sound of their crying-out on that breathless evening was to be heard half way up the hill behind the exquisite lace-work spire of the cathedral. Yet never was opera better welcome anywhere, even when the *prima donna* happens to be called a Lind or a Grisi. The public believed and trembled—believed and shouted—cared nothing for the haggard scenery and the rubbishing faded dresses, but went into the tale of the Devil, the Evil One, and the saintly girl (I have some idea that the Princess was left out of the legend—as has happened in London at Her Majesty's), with an honest credulity and rapture which I have never seen exceeded.

Not one of the least curious facts which can be put on record in regard to this popular opera, is, that it has, probably, never been adequately cast, save by the four first artists, Cinti-Damoureau, Falcon, Nourrit, and Levasseur, who were brought together for its first personation.—I have never heard a tenor sing the music precisely as it was written: neither Duprez the magnificent, nor Mario the fascinating, nor Tamberlik the vigorous. It was Meyerbeer's habit to load his artists with responsibilities beyond their powers. He would exact the very highest and the very lowest note from every given woman and man. He delighted in combinations of the utmost eccentricity and difficulty (witness the triple cadenza in the unaccompanied *trio* from this very "Robert"),—he would heap instrument on instrument in accompaniment, as though he had set himself to crush and not to support the voice. I have never heard any performance of "Robert" without that most tantalising of impressions that "something was all but going wrong."

With all this, the vitality of the work is intense, and has kept it, and will keep it, on the stage. What alternate luxury, brilliancy, and piquancy are in the *ballet* music—how striking is the organ effect in the last act (Meyerbeer's best last act)!—Who needs to be reminded of the amount of vigorous passion in the well-known song "Grace" (the delight of excruciating amateurs, who, were they wise as a race, would avoid the Princess Isabella's almost frantic pleading—as a deadly snare by no means to be stumbled into in quiet Christian drawing-rooms).—The Waltz of the Demons sounds somewhat old already, it is true, and the scene of the Saint and the Fiend, below the foot of the crucifix, is forced and hysterical, if it be measured against any of Signor Rossini's combinations of emotion (as, for instance, those in "Otello"), but that "Robert," as an opera, stands, and will stand, I believe, as I believe (with a difference) in the consummate beauty of Gluck's "Orpheus," or in the delicious melodious comicality showered over "Il Barbière" and "La Cenerentola."

What has been said, applies still more closely to "Les Huguenots." Curiously enough, Meyerbeer seemed to follow the same instincts as those which moved his old fellow-pupil under Voget—Weber.—After Weber's "Der Freischutz" came his "Euryanthe." After Meyerbeer's weird "Robert" came the chivalresque French story of St. Bartholomew's Night, by much the grandest historical opera in being. How a man so timid, a Hebrew to boot, could pitch on a subject so wide, so elaborate, and so difficult, as he is among the anomalies of genius.—"Les Huguenots" has never been seen in all its pomp and pleasure (as Coleridge hath it), since its first few years in Paris, beginning with 1836. The unwieldy length of the whole five hours and a half on its first representations has rendered compression and sacrifice of its earlier portions inevitable; save those could be presented point-device. Yet, so presented, how delightful they were! The opening scene in the Hôtel de Nevers, with its gallants and its chess-players, and the Huguenot chevalier entrapped into the midst of this good-for-little, yet altogether delightful society;—the exquisite chorus "L'aventure est singulière," when the young Catholic nobles try to penetrate the mystery of the masked lady, make up as fine and perfect picture-music (French picture-music, to boot) as exists. They are as clear and brilliant as if one of Watteau's most richly-finished groups could be put into sound. So, too, are the scenes at the court of Chenonceaux, in the second act of "Les Huguenots," wonderfully exciting the attention, and charming the sense, by their spirit and luxury—before the tragic passion of the story has begun to stir itself. Yet three-fourths of these two acts are now of necessity suppressed, if only out of consideration to the performers. In no other opera that I know, is the

chorus so mercilessly over-worked, and the chorus is required to show courteous behaviour itself and act, as well as to sing by memory some of the most difficult music ever written,—at all events, before the excruciating abominations of Herr Wagner were engendered.

The present attempt is merely one to mark a few characteristics—and thus it would be superfluous to follow the course of this superb historical musical drama step by step:—the more so, because all its dramatic combinations are as familiar to us as the great scenes of Shakespeare.—Its intensely French colour may, however, be illustrated once again. The chamber scene between Raoul and Valentine in the fourth act (never to be thought of without a memorial word of gratitude to Mario and Grisi), is, with all its resistless power, as national as that noble and awful painted tragic scene—the Murder of the Duke de Guise, by Paul Delaroche.—The fifth act, though the most ambitious, is the weakest of the work: but, save in his "Robert," its maker always exhausted himself before the charm was wound up. The fifth act of "Le Prophète," with its historical *bravura* for the distressed mother, and the song at the final orgie, after the fashion of Sardanapalus (note by note, on the theme of the Paddy Carey, whose

Cheeks like thumping red potatoes

have long been the delight of Dublin boys and girls), is almost absurd in its weakness.—The trio of the voice and two flutes, which closes "L'Etoile," written to accommodate the flute-like Mdlle. Jenny Lind, is a piece of unmeaning display. The whole last act of "Le Pardon de Plöermel," where the distraught maiden, after being insensible since midnight, is brought, by full daylight (wet from a weir, to boot), restored to her wits, to be married out of hand with a ready-made hymn, and a lovely ready-prepared canopy, is an excrescence of utter silliness, which would have doomed for ever one less strong, with all his unsurpassable weaknesses, than Meyerbeer.

The compound of force and feebleness could not be completer, in its incompleteness, than in and throughout the artistic history of this trembling, ambitious, successful, mean, generous man.

Among all those who have won an universal reputation in dramatic music, Meyerbeer was the most timid, the most insecure as to his own purposes, with all his gigantic notions of effect. His operas were not so much written as stuck together, bit by bit, while the rehearsals of them were going on.—If a machinist under a paper cap crossed the stage, and made some irreverent remark on the length of this scene—or that other procession—the composer shrank up, faltered, held council on the matter,—and, after having been inexorable in his first pretensions, conceded, with a humility which became ignoble, in regard to the man under the paper cap. He did not know what his effects were to be, or where they were to be made, but went on trying, contriving, and, like the bird that builds a nest, bringing, here a straw,—there a bit of wool,—anon, a fragment of wood, or stone,—and, in the end, building not so much a nest, as a habitation for musical drama.

No stone was left unturned by him to procure—one might better say to force—a success. It may be questioned whether so skilful an artist ever existed, who employed with so elaborate a patience every machinery of compliment and cajolery as he did. He prepared for the first representations of his operas by paying money right and left, with an anxiety humiliating to think of, and on a scale of expense impossible to any other who had not an ample private fortune. No ante-chamber was too mean for him to be willing to wait in it, provided the master of the house had the slightest shred of influence on press or public. He shared Sir Robert Walpole's opinion that every man has his price—and would return to attempt and to tempt every imaginable assistance with a pertinacity nothing short of whimsical, but which was rather distressing to be exposed to. The Boulevard des Italiens, a sort of French Rialto for musical rumour, streamed with tales of his expedients, months before his operas were painfully born. One year, said rumour, Meyerbeer had been buying up all the stage organs, to prevent his new organ effect being forestalled. There was a later tale how he had connived to the crippling of the organ at the Grand Opéra, when the same was to help a great scene in Nieodemeyri's "Stradella."—Another year, would come simmering stories of pilot-banquets after the fashion of Lucullus (and well did Meyerbeer understand the art of dining, till ill health, and with it hypochondria, claimed him).—He had no objection to bespeaking opera-books at munificent prices, from the men of *feuilleton*, home or foreign, though it did not follow that the books were to be set. I can speak to his face of puzzled inquietude, when one of the fraternity ventured to decline a commission for such a piece of work—in its very purpose, and by its very essence, unproducible. Though he harassed every one during his rehearsals to the point of exasperation, by at first refusing the smallest concession, when the hour of performance drew nigh he was seized with a cowering terror, which would yield or admit any change. Music lasting one hour and a quarter was cut out of "Le Prophète" within a very few weeks of its production:—and its great situation—the one of fascination, in the fourth or Cathedral act, would have possibly shared the same fate, had not Madame Viardot, the original Fides, backed by Ary Scheffer (how all this comes back like a thing of yesterday!), pleaded to be allowed to show what could be represented by such an actress in such a situation.

The music and the man were one.—Having made himself altogether French, to the point of producing all his best works in France (for his "Vielka," written for Berlin as a court command to a composer with a court appointment,

was a mere sketch as compared with "L'Etoile," as completed from that sketch for L'Opéra Comique at Paris), Meyerbeer became less and less popular in Germany as time went on.—He was treated by his countrymen as a sort of renegade. Every folly and inconsistency in his operas — whether of story or of music — was massacred as mercilessly as if they had not possessed in them one single atom of saving grace. He lived for Paris — he dreamed of Paris—he fought for Paris—for months and months establishing himself in that city as a solitary, when even a new singer was "in the wind," or a new chance was on the cards—or when (worst of all) a new composer "cropped up" in possible rivalry.—Young Germany paid him in his own coin: and to the incomplete presentations of his difficult operas—each less real than the former one—brought more and more sarcastic comment, less and less of respect; being, for the nonce, busy in trying to enthrone on the stage such a shapeless mystery of musical discord and ignorance as Herr Wagner.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XV. SISTERS' CONFIDENCES.

The day of Calvert's departure was a very sad one at the villa; so was the next, and the next! It is impossible to repeat the routine of a quiet life when we have lost one whose pleasant companionship imparted to the hours a something of his own identity, without feeling the dreary blank his absence leaves, and, together with this, comes the not very flattering conviction of how little of our enjoyment we owed to our own efforts, and how much to his.

"I never thought we should have missed him so much," said Emily, as she sat with her sister beside the lake, where the oars lay along the boats unused, and the fishing-net hung to dry from the branches of the mulberry-tree.

"Of course we miss him," said Florence, peevishly. "You don't live in daily, hourly intercourse with a person without feeling his absence; but I almost think it is a relief," said she, slightly flushing.

"A relief, Florry! And in what way?"

"I don't know; that is, I'm not disposed to go into a nice analysis of Mr. Calvert's mind, and the effect produced upon my own, by the mere iteration of things I never agreed with. Besides, I don't want in the least to limit your regrets for him. He was one of your favourites."

"I always thought him more a favourite of yours than mine, Florry."

"Then I suspect you made a great mistake; but, really, I think we might talk of something else. What about those hyacinths; didn't you tell me they ought to be moved?"

"Yes, Harry said they had too much sun there, and were losing colour in consequence."

"I can't imagine him a great authority in gardening."

"Well, but he really knew a great deal about it, and had an exquisite taste in the landscape part of it; witness that little plat under your window."

"The fuchsias are pretty," said she, with a saucy air. "Isn't the post late to-day?"

"It came two hours ago. Don't you remember my saying there were no letters, except two for Harry."

"And where are you to forward them to him? Has he been confidential enough to tell you?"

"No; he said, if anything comes for me, keep it till you hear of me."

"He affected mystery. I think he imagined it gave something of romance to him, though a more prosaic, worldly character, never existed."

"I don't agree with you, Florry. I think it was the worldliness was the affectation."

Florence coloured deeply, but made no reply.

"And I'll tell you why I am convinced of it. In the mention of anything heroic or daring, or in allusion to any trait of deep devotion or pathetic tenderness, his lip would tremble and his voice falter, and then catching himself, and evidently ashamed of his weakness, he would come out with some silly, or even heartless remark, as though to mask his confusion and give him time to recover himself."

"I never noticed this," said Florence, coldly. "Indeed, I must confess to a much less critical study of his character than you have bestowed on him."

"You are unjust to yourself. It was you first pointed out this trait in him to me."

"I forget it, then, that's all," said she, captiously.

"Oh, I know he was ashamed of being thought romantic."

"I thought I had asked you to talk of something or somebody else, Milly. Let us, at least, select a topic we can think and speak on with some approach to agreement."

Accustomed to bear with Florence's impatience and her capricious humours as those of an invalid, Emily made no answer, but drew out her work from a basket and prepared to begin.

"You needn't hope to make much progress with your embroidery, Milly. You'll have no one to read out the Faust or the Winter Night's Tale to-day."

"Ah, that's true, and Joseph won't be here till Saturday," said she, sighing, "not to say that I don't suspect he'll have much time to bestow on reading aloud."

"I thought you were going to say that he reads badly," said Florry, with a forced laugh.

"Oh no, Florry, I like his reading very much indeed; particularly of Tennyson and Browning."

"It is not so melodramatic as your friend Mr. Calvert's; but, in my poor estimation, it is in much truer taste."

"What a strange girl you are! Do you forget the evening you said, I'll not let Joseph read aloud any more; I detest to see him in any rivalry of which he has the worst?"

"I must have said it in mockery, then, Milly, for I know of nothing in which Mr. Calvert

could claim superiority over him. I am aware this is not your opinion, Milly; indeed, poor Joseph has not many allies in this house, for even Aunt Grainger was one of the fascinated by our captivating guest."

"Well, but you know, dearest Florry, what a magic there is in the name Calvert to my aunt."

"Yes, I know and deplore it. I believe, too, from chance expressions she has let drop, that her relations with those very people suggest anything rather than proud or pleasant memories; but she is determined to think of them as friends, and is quite vain at having the permission to do so."

"Even Harry used to smile at her reverence for 'dear old Rocksley.'"

"The worse taste in him," said Florence, haughtily.

"How bitter you are to the poor fellow," said the other, plaintively.

"I am not bitter to him. I think him a very accomplished, clever, amusing person, good-looking, manly, and so forth; and probably, if he hadn't persecuted me with attentions that I did not like or encourage, I might have felt very cordially towards him."

"Could he help being in love with you, Florry?"

"In love!" repeated she, in a voice of mockery and scorn.

"Ay, Florry, I never saw a man more thoroughly, devotedly in love. I could tell, as I entered the breakfast-room, whether you had spoken to him in coldness or the reverse. His voice, as he read aloud, would betray whether you were listening with pleasure or indifference. You had not a mood of gay or grave that was not reflected in his face; and one day I remember, when I remarked on the capricious changes of his spirits, he said, 'Don't blame me; I am what she makes me: the happiest or the most miserable fellow breathing.' 'Well,' replied I, 'I fancied from your good spirits it was some pleasant tidings the post had brought you.' 'No,' said he, 'it was this;' and he drew a violet from his pocket, and showed it to me. I suppose you had given it to him."

"I dropped it, and he wouldn't give it back. I remember the day." And, as she spoke, she turned her head aside, but her sister saw that her cheek was crimson. Then suddenly she said, "How was it that you had such confidences together? I'm sure that, knowing my engagement, you must have seen how improper it was to listen to such nonsense on his part."

"I couldn't help it, Florry; the poor fellow would come to me with his heart almost breaking. I declare, there were times when his despair actually terrified me; and having heard from Aunt Grainger what dreadful passions these Calverts give way to—how reckless of consequences——"

"There, there, dear, spare me that physiology of the race of Calverts, of which I have gone through, I hope, every imaginable feature. To poor Aunt Grainger's eyes the dragon of the Drachenfels is a mild domestic creature in comparison with one of them." There was a jarring vibration in her sister's tone, that told it were safer not to prolong the discussion, and little more was said as they walked towards the house. At last Florence stopped short, and, pointing to the window of the room lately occupied by Calvert, said, "Joseph will dislike all those climbing creepers there, Milly; he hates that sort of thing. Let them be cut away."

"If you wish it, dearest; but is it not a pity? Only think of all the time and pains it cost to train that jessamine——"

"Oh, if they have such tender memories for you, let them remain by all means; but I think it will be quite as well not to tell Joseph the reasons for which they were spared."

Though the speech was uttered in irritation, Emily affected to hear it without emotion, and said, "It was Harry's own desire that we should not speak of him to Joseph, and I mean to obey it."

CHAPTER XVI. A LOVERS' QUARREL.

In course of time Loyd arrived at the villa. He came tired and worn out by a fatiguing journey. There had been floods, broken bridges, and bad roads in Savoy, and the St. Gothard was almost impassable from a heavy snow-storm. The difficulties of the road had lost him a day, one of the very few he was to have with them, and he came, wearied and somewhat irritated, to his journey's end.

Lovers ought, perhaps, to be more thoughtful about "effect" than they are in real life. They might take a lesson in this respect with good profit from the drama, where they enter with all the aids that situation and costume can give them. At all events, Calvert would scarcely have presented himself in the jaded and disordered condition in which Loyd now appeared.

"How ill he looks, poor fellow," said Emily, as the two sisters left him to dress for dinner.

"I should think he may look ill. Fancy his travelling on, night and day, through rain, and sleet, and snow, and always feeling that his few hours here were to be shortened by all these disasters. And, besides all this, he is sorry now for the step he has taken; he begins to suspect he ought not to have left England; that this separation—it must be for at least two years—bodes ill to us. That it need not have been longer had he stayed at the home bar, and had, besides, the opportunity of coming out to see us in Vacation. That it was his friends who over-persuaded him; and now that he has had a little time for calm reflection, away from them, he really sees no obstacles to his success at Westminster that he will not have to encounter at Calcutta."

"And will he persist, in face of this conviction?"

"Of course he will! He cannot exhibit himself to the world as a creature who does not know his own mind for two days together."

"Is that of more consequence than what would really serve his interests, Florry?"

"I am no casuist, Milly, but I think that the

impression a man makes by his character for resolution is always of consequence."

Emily very soon saw that her sister spoke with an unusual degree of irritation. The arrival of her lover had not overjoyed her; it had scarcely cheered her. He came, too, not full of high hopes and animated by the prospect of a bright future, speculating on the happy days that were before them, and even fixing the time they were to meet again, but depressed and dispirited, darkly hinting at all the dangers of absence, and gloomily telling over the long miles of ocean that were so soon to roll between them.

Now Florence was scarcely prepared for all this. She had expected to be comforted, and supported, and encouraged; and yet from herself, now, all the encouragement and all the support was to be derived! *She* was to infuse hope, to supply courage, and inspire determination. He was only there to be sustained and supported. It is true she knew nothing of the trials and difficulties which were before him, and she could neither discuss nor lighten them; but she could talk of India as a mere neighbouring country, the "overland" a rather pleasant tour, and two years—what signified two years, when it was to be their first and last separation? For, if he could not obtain the leave he was all but promised, it was arranged that she should go out to Calcutta, and their marriage take place there.

He rallied at last under all these cheering suggestions, and gradually dropped into that talk so fascinating to Promessi Sposi, in which affection and worldliness are blended together, and where the feelings of the heart and the furniture of the drawing-room divide the interest between them. There was a dash of romance, too, in the notion of life in the far East—some far-away home in the Neilgherries, some lone bungalow on the Sutlej—that helped them to paint their distant landscape with more effect, and they sat, in imagination, under a spreading plantain on the Himalaya, and watched the blood-red sunsets over the plains of Hindostan.

Time passed very rapidly in this fashion. Love is the very sublime of egotism, and people never weary of themselves. The last evening—sad things these last evenings—came, and they strolled out to take a last look on the lake and the snow-white Alps beyond it. The painful feeling of having so short a time to say so much was over each of them, and made them more silent than usual. As they thus loitered along, they reached a spot where a large evergreen oak stood alone, spreading its gigantic arms over the water, and from which the view of the lake extended for miles in each direction.

"This is the spot to have a summer-house, Florry," said Loyd; "and when I come back I'll build one here."

"You see there is a rustic bench here already. Harry made it."

Scarcely were the words uttered than she felt her cheek burning, and the tingling rush of her blood to her temples.

"Harry means Mr. Calvert, I conclude?" said he, coldly.

"Yes," said she, faintly.

"It was a name I have never uttered since I passed this threshold, Florry, and I vowed to myself that I would not be the first to allude to it. My pledge, however, went no further, and I am now released from its obligation. Let us talk of him freely."

"No, Joseph, I had rather not. When he was leaving this, it was his last wish that his name was not to be uttered here. We gave him our solemn promise, and I feel sure you will not ask me to forget it."

"I have no means of knowing by what right he could pretend to exact such a promise, which, to say the least, is a very unusual one."

"There was no question of a right in the matter. Mr. Calvert was here as our friend, associating with us in close intimacy, enjoying our friendship and our confidence, and if he had reasons of his own for the request, they were enough for us."

"That does not satisfy me, Florence," said he, gravely.

"I am sorry for it. I have no other explanation to give you."

"Well; I mean to be more explicit. Has he told you of a correspondence that passed between us?"

"Once for all, Joseph, I will not be drawn into this discussion. Rightfully, or the reverse, I have given my word, and I will keep it."

"Do you mean to say that to any mention of this man's name, or to any incident in which it will occur, you will turn a deaf ear, and not reply?"

"I will not speak of him."

"Be it so. But you will listen to me when *I* speak of him, and you will give my words the same credence you accord to them on other things. This is surely not asking too much?"

"It is more, however, than I am willing to grant."

"This becomes serious, Florence, and cannot be dismissed lightly. Our relations towards each other are all but the closest that can bind two destinies. They are such as reject all secresy—all mystery, at all events. Now, if Mr. Calvert's request were the merest caprice, the veriest whim, it matters not. The moment it becomes a matter of peace of mind to me it is no longer a trifle."

"You are making a very serious matter of very little," said she, partly offended.

"The unlimited confidence I have placed, and desire still to place, in you, is not a little matter. I insist upon having a full explanation."

"You insist?"

"Yes, I insist. Remember, Florence, that what I claim is not more my due for my sake than for your own. No name in the world should stand between yours and mine, least of all that of one whom neither of us can look on with respect or esteem."

"If this be the remains of some old jealousy——"

"Jealousy! Jealousy! Why, what do you mean?"

"Simply that there was a time when *he*

thought *you* his rival, and it was just possible you might have reciprocated the sentiment."

"This is intolerable," cried he. Then hastily checking his angry outburst, he added: "Why should we grow warm, Florence dearest, over a matter which cannot have but one aspect for us both? It is of you, not of myself, I have been thinking all this time. I simply begged you to let me know what sort of relations existed between you and Mr. Calvert that should prevent you speaking of him to me."

"You said something about insisting. Now, insisting is an ugly word. There is an air of menace about it."

"I am not disposed to recal it," said he, sternly.

"So much the better; at least it will save us a world of very unpleasant recrimination, for I refuse to comply."

"You refuse! Now let me understand you, for this is too vital a point for me at least to make any mistake about—what is it that you refuse?"

"Don't you think the tone of our present discussion is the best possible reason for not prolonging it?"

"No! If we have each of us lost temper, I think the wisest course would be to recover ourselves, and see if we cannot talk the matter over in a better spirit."

"Begin then by unsaying that odious word."

"What is the word?"

"Insist! You must not insist upon anything."

"I'll take back the word if you so earnestly desire it, Florence," said he, gravely; "but I hope request will be read in its place."

"Now then, what is it you request? for I frankly declare that all this time I don't rightly understand what you ask of me."

"This is worse than I suspected," said he, angrily, "for now I see that it is in the mere spirit of defiance that you rejected my demand."

"Upon my word, sir, I believe it will turn out that neither of us knew very much of the other."

"You think so?"

"Yes; don't you?"

He grew very pale, and made no answer, though he twice seemed as if about to speak.

"I declare," cried she, and her heightened colour and flashing eye showed the temper that stirred her—"I declare that I think we shall have employed all our lately displayed candour to very little advantage if it does not carry us a little further."

"I scarcely catch your meaning," said he, in a low voice.

"What I meant was, that by a little further effort of our frankness we might come to convey to each other that scenes like these are not pleasant, nor need they ever occur again."

"I believe at last I apprehend you," said he, in a broken accent. "You desire that our engagement should be broken off?"

She made no answer, but averted her head.

"I will do my best to be calm, Florence," continued he, "and I will ask as much of you. Let neither of us sacrifice the prospect of a whole life's happiness for the sake of a petty victory in a very petty dispute. If, however, you are of opinion——" he stopped, he was about to say more than he had intended, more than he knew how to say, and he stopped, confused and embarrassed.

"Why don't you continue?" said she, with a cold smile.

"Because I don't know what I was about to say."

"Then shall I say it for you?"

"Yes, do so."

"It was this, then, or at least to this purport: If, you, Miss Florence Walter, are of opinion that two people who have not succeeded in inspiring each other with that degree of confidence that rejects all distrust, are scarcely wise in entering into a contract of which truthfulness is the very soul and essence, and that, though not very gallant on *my* part, as the man to suggest it, yet in all candour, which here must take the place of courtesy, the sooner the persons so placed escape from such a false position the better."

"And part?" said he, in a hollow, feeble voice.

She shrugged her shoulders slightly, as though to say that, or any similar word, will convey my meaning.

"Oh, Florence, is it come to this? Is this to be a last evening in its saddest, bitterest sense?"

"When gentlemen declare that they 'insist,' I take it they mean to have their way," said she, with a careless toss of her head.

"Good Heavens!" cried he, in a passion, "have you never cared for me at all? or is your love so little rooted that you can tear it from your heart without a pang?"

"All this going back on the past is very unprofitable," said she, coldly.

He was stung by the contemptuous tone even more than by the words she used. It seemed as though she held his love so lightly she would not condescend to the slightest trouble to retain it, and this too at a moment of parting.

"Florence!" said he, in a tone of deep melancholy, "if I am to call you by that name for the last time—tell me, frankly, is this a sudden caprice of yours, or has it lain rankling in your mind, as a thing you would conquer if you could, or submit to, if you must?"

"I suspect it is neither one nor the other," said she, with a levity that almost seemed gaiety. "I don't think I am capricious, and I know I never harbour a long-standing grievance. I really believe that it is to your own heart you must look for the reasons of what has occurred between us. I have often heard that men are so ashamed of being jealous, that they'll never forgive any one who sees them in the fit."

"Enough, more than enough," said he, trembling from head to foot. "Let us part."

"Remember, the proposal comes from you."

"Yes, yes, it comes from me. It matters little whence it comes."

"Oh, I beg your pardon, it matters a great deal, at least to me. I am not to bear the reproaches of my aunt and my sister for a supposed cruelty towards a man who has himself repudiated our engagement. It would be rather hard that I was to be deserted and condemned too."

"Deserted, Florry!" cried he, as the tears stood in his eyes.

"Well, I don't mean deserted. There is no desertion on either side. It is a perfectly amicable arrangement of two people who are not disposed to travel the same road. I don't want to imply that any more blame attaches to *you* than to *me*."

"How can any attach to me at all?" cried he.

"Oh then, if you wish it, I take the whole of it."

"Shall I speak to your aunt, Miss Walter, or will you?"

"It does not signify much which of us is the first to acquaint her Perhaps, however, it would come with more propriety from you. I think I see her yonder near the cypress-trees, and I'm sure you'll be glad to have it over. Wait one moment, this ring——" as she endeavoured to draw a small ruby ring from her finger, Loyd saw the turquoise which she wore on the other hand—"this ring," said she, in some confusion, "is yours."

"Not this one," said he, sternly, as he pointed to the other.

"No, the ruby," said she, with an easy smile. "It was getting to hurt my finger."

"I hope you may wear the other more easily," said he, with a bitter laugh.

"Thank you," said she, with a curtsey, and then turned away, and walked towards the house.

After Loyd had proceeded a few steps to overtake Miss Grainger, he stopped, and hastened back to the villa. Such an explanation as he must make could, he felt, be only done by a letter. He could not, besides, face the questioning and cross-questioning the old lady would submit him to, nor endure the misery of recalling, at her bidding, each stage of their sad quarrel. A letter, therefore, he would write, and then leave the villa for ever, and without a farewell to any. He knew this was not a gracious way to treat those who had been uniformly affectionate and kind—who had been to him like dear sisters—but he dreaded a possible meeting. He could not answer for himself, either, as to what charges he might be led to make against Florence, or what weakness of character he might exhibit in the midst of his affliction. "I will simply narrate so much as will show that we have agreed to separate, and are never to meet more," muttered he. "Florence may tell as much more as she likes, and give what version of me she pleases. It matters little now how or what they think of one whose heart is already in the grave." And thus saying, he gained his room, and, locking the door, began to write. Deeply occupied in his task, which he found so difficult that several half-scrawled sheets already littered the table before him, he never felt the time as it passed. It was already midnight before he was aware of it, and still his letter was not finished. It was so hard to say enough and not too much; so hard to justify himself in any degree and yet spare *her*, against whom he would not use one word of reproach; so hard to confess the misery that he felt, and yet not seem abject in the very avowal.

Not one of his attempts had satisfied him. Some were too lengthy, some too curt and brief, some read cold, stern, and forbidding; others seemed like half entreaties for a more merciful judgment; in fact, he was but writing down each passing emotion of his mind, and recording the varying passions that swayed him.

As he sat thus, puzzled and embarrassed, he sprung up from his chair with terror at a cry that seemed to fill the room, and make the very air vibrate around him. It was a shriek as of one in the maddest agony, and lasted for some seconds. He thought it came from the lake, and he flung open his window and listened, but all was calm and still, the very faintest night air was astir, and not even the leaves moved. He then opened his door, and crept stealthily out upon the corridor; but all was quiet within the house. Noiselessly he walked to the head of the stairs, and listened; but not a sound nor a stir was to be heard. He went back to his room, agitated and excited. He had read of those conditions of cerebral excitement when the nerves of sense present impressions which have no existence in fact, and the sufferers fancy that they have seen sights, or heard sounds, which had no reality.

He thought he could measure the agitation that distressed him by this disturbance of the brain, and he bathed his temples with cold water, and sat down at the open window to try to regain calm and self-possession. For a while the speculation on this strange problem occupied him, and he wandered on in thought to ask himself which of the events of life should be assumed as real, and which mere self-delusions. "If, for instance," thought he, "I could believe that this dreadful scene with Florence never occurred, that it was a mere vision conjured up by my own gloomy forebodings, and my sorrow at our approaching separation—what ecstasy would be mine. What is there," asked he of himself aloud, "to show or prove that we have parted? What evidence have I of one word that may or may not have passed between us, that would not apply to that wild scream that so lately chilled my very blood, and which I now know was a mere trick of imagination?" As he spoke, he turned to the table, and there lay the proof that he challenged before him. There, beside his half-written letter, stood the ring he had given her, and which she had just given back to him. The revulsion was very painful, and the tears, which had not come before, now rolled heavily down his cheeks. He took up the ring and raised it to his lips, but laid it down without kissing it. These sent-back gifts are very sad things; they do not bury the memory of the loved one who wore them. Like the flower that fell from her hair, they bear other memories. They tell of blighted hopes, of broken vows, of a whole life's plan torn, scattered, and given to the winds. Their odour is not of love; they smell of the rank grave, whither our hearts are hastening. He sat gazing moodily at this ring—it was the story of his life. He remembered the hour and the

place he gave it to her; the words he spoke, her blush, her trembling hand as he drew it on her finger, the pledge he uttered, and which he made her repeat to him again. He started. What was that noise? Was that his name he heard uttered? Yes, some one was calling him. He hastened to the door, and opened it, and there stood Emily. She was leaning against the architrave, like one unable for further effort; her face bloodless, and her hair in disorder. She staggered forward, and fell upon his shoulder. "What is it, Milly, my own dear sister?" cried he; "what is the matter?"

"Oh, Joseph," cried she, in a voice of anguish, "what have you done? I could never have believed this of *you!*"

"What do you mean—what is it you charge me with?"

"*You*, who knew how she loved you—how her whole heart was your own!"

"But what do you impute to me, Milly dearest?"

"How cruel! How cruel!" cried she, wringing her hands.

"I swear to you I do not know of what you accuse me."

"You have broken her heart," cried she, vehemently. "She will not survive this cruel desertion."

"But who accuses me of this?" asked he, indignantly.

"She, herself, does—she did, at least, so long as reason remained to her; but now, poor darling, her mind is wandering, and she is not conscious of what she says, and yet her cry is, 'Oh, Joseph, do not leave me. Go to him, Milly; on your knees beseech him not to desert me. That I am in fault I know, but I will never again offend him.' I cannot, I will not, tell you all the dreadful—all the humiliating things she says; but through all we can read the terrible trials she must have sustained at your hands, and how severely you have used her. Come to her, at least," cried she, taking his arm. "I do not ask or want to know what has led to this sad scene between you; but come to her before it be too late."

"Let me first of all tell you, Milly——" He stopped. He meant to have revealed the truth; but it seemed so ungenerous to be the accuser, that he stopped, and was silent.

"I don't care to hear anything. You may be as blameless as you like. What I want is to save her. Come at once."

Without a word he followed her down the stairs, and across the hall, and up another small stair. "Wait a moment," said she, opening the door, and then as quickly she turned and beckoned to him to enter.

Still dressed, but with her hair falling loose about her, and her dress disordered, Florence lay on her bed as in a trance — so light her breathing you could see no motion of the chest. Her eyes were partly opened, and lips parted; but even these gave to her face a greater look of death.

"She is sleeping at last," whispered Miss Grainger. "She has not spoken since you were here."

Loyd knelt down beside the bed, and pressed his cheek against her cold hand; and the day dawn, as it streamed in between the shutters, saw him still there.

CHAPTER XVII. PARTING SORROWS.

Hour after hour Loyd knelt beside the bed where Florence lay, motionless and unconscious. Her aunt and sister glided noiselessly about, passed in and out of the room, rarely speaking, and then but in a whisper. At last a servant whispered in Loyd's ear a message. He started and said, "Yes, let him wait;" and then, in a moment after, added, "No, say no. I'll not want the boat—the luggage may be taken back to my room."

It was a few minutes after this that Emily came behind him, and, bending down so as to speak in his ear, said, "How I thank you, my dear brother, for this! I know the price of your devotion—none of us will ever forget it."

He made no answer, but pressed the cold damp hand he held to his lips.

"Does he know that it is nigh seven o'clock, Milly, and that he must be at Como a quarter before eight, or he'll lose the train?" said Miss Grainger to her niece.

"He knows it all, aunt; he has sent away the boat; he will not desert us."

"Remember, child, what it is he is sacrificing. It may chance to be his whole future fortune."

"He'll stay, let it cost what it may," said Emily.

"I declare I think I will speak to him. It is my duty to speak to him," said the old lady, in her own fussy, officious tone. "I will not expose myself to the reproaches of his family—very just reproaches, too, if they imagined we had detained him. He will lose, not only his passage out to India, but, not impossibly, his appointment too. Joseph, Joseph, I have a word to say to you."

"Dearest aunt, I implore you not to say it," cried Emily.

"Nonsense, child. Is it for a mere tiff and a fit of hysterics a man is to lose his livelihood? Joseph Loyd, come into the next room for a moment."

"I cannot leave this," said he, in a low, faint voice; "say what you have to say to me here."

"It is on the stroke of seven."

He nodded.

"The train leaves a quarter before eight, and if you don't start by this one you can't reach Leghorn by Tuesday."

"I know it; I'm not going."

"Do you mean to give up your appointment?" asked she, in a voice of almost scornful reproach.

"I mean, that I'll not go."

"What will your friends say to this?" said she, angrily.

"I have not thought, nor can I think, of that now; my place is here."

"Then I must protest; and I beg you to remember that I have protested against this resolve on your part. Your family are not to say, hereafter, that it was through any interference or influence of ours that you took this unhappy determination. I'll write, this very day, to your father, and say so. There, it is striking seven now!"

He made no reply; indeed, it seemed as if he had not heard her.

"You might still be in time, if you were to exert yourself," whispered she, with more earnestness.

"I tell you again," said he, raising his voice to a louder pitch, "that my place is here, and I will not leave her."

A low, faint sigh was breathed by the sick girl, and gently moving her hand, she laid it on his head.

"You know me, then, dearest?" whispered he. "You know who it is kneels beside you?"

She made no answer, but her feeble fingers tried to play with his hair, and strayed, unguided, over his head.

What shape of reproach, remonstrance, or protest, Miss Grainger's mutterings took, is not recorded; but she bustled out of the room, evidently displeased with all in it.

"She knows you, Joseph. She is trying to thank you," said Emily.

"Her lips are moving; can you hear what she says, Milly?"

The girl bent over the bed, till her ear almost touched her sister's mouth. "Yes, darling, from his heart he does. He never loved you with such devotion as now. She asks if you can forgive her, Joseph. She remembers everything."

"And not leave me," sighed Florence, in a voice barely audible.

"No, my own dearest, I will not leave you," was all that he could utter in the conflict of joy and sorrow he felt. A weak attempt to thank him she made by an effort to press his hand, but it sent a thrill of delight through his heart, more than a recompense for all he had suffered.

If Emily, with a generous delicacy, retired towards the window and took up her work, not very profitably perhaps, seeing how little light came through the nearly closed shutters, let us not show ourselves less discreet, and leave the lovers to themselves. Be assured, dear reader, that in our reserve on this point we are not less mindful of your benefit than of theirs. The charming things, so delightful to say and so ecstatic to hear, are wonderfully tame to tell. Perhaps their very charm is in the fact, that their spell was only powerful to those who uttered them. At all events, we are determined on discretion, and shall only own that, though Aunt Grainger made periodical visits to the sick-room, with frequent references to the hour of the day, and the departures and arrival of various rail trains, they never heard her, or, indeed, knew that she was present.

And though she was mistress of those "asides" and that grand inuendo style which is so deadly round a corner, they never paid the slightest heed to her fire. All the adroit references to the weather, and the "glorious day for travelling," went for naught. As well as the more subtle compliments she made Florence on the appetite she displayed for her chocolate, and which were intended to convey that a young lady who enjoyed her breakfast so heartily need never have lost a man a passage to Calcutta for the pleasure of seeing her eat it. Truth was, Aunt Grainger was not in love, and, consequently, no more fit to legislate for those who were than a peasant in rude health is to sympathise with the nervous irritability of a fine lady! Neither was Milly in love, you will perhaps say, and *she* felt for them. True, but Milly might be—Milly was constitutionally exposed to the malady, and the very vicinity of the disease was what the faculty call a predisposing cause. It made her very happy to see Joseph so fond, and Florence so contented.

Far too happy to think of the price he paid for his happiness, Loyd passed the day beside her. Never before was he so much in love! Indeed, it was not till the thought of losing her for ever presented itself, that he knew or felt what a blank life would hereafter become to him. Some quaint German writer has it that these little quarrels which lovers occasionally get up as a sort of trial of their own powers of independence, are like the attempts people make to remain a long time under water, and which only end in a profound conviction that their organisation was unequal to the test. But there is another form these passing differences occasionally take. Each of the erring parties is sure to nourish in his or her heart the feeling of being most intensely beloved by the other! It is a strange form for selfishness to take, but selfishness is the most Protæan of all failings, and there never was seen the mask it could not fit to its face.

"And so you imagined you could cast me off, Florence;" "And you, Master Joseph, had the presumption to think you could leave me," formed the sum and substance of that long day's whispering. My dear, kind reader, do not despise the sermon from the seeming simplicity of the text. There is a deal to be said on it, and very pleasantly said, too. It is, besides, a sort of litigation in which charge and cross charge recur incessantly, and, as in all amicable suits, each party pays his own costs.

It was fortunate, most fortunate, that their reconciliation took this form. It enabled each to do that which was most imminent to be done—to ignore Calvert altogether, and never recur to any mention of his name. Loyd saw that the turquoise ring was no longer worn by her, and she, with a woman's quickness, noted his observation of the fact. I am not sure that in her eyes a recognition of his joy did not glisten, but she certainly never uttered a word that could bring up his name.

"So I am your guest, madam, for ten days more!" said Loyd to Miss Grainger, as they sat at tea that night.

"Oh, we are only too happy. It is a very

great pleasure to us, if—if we could feel that your delay may not prove injurious to you."

"It will be very enjoyable, at all events," said he, with an easy smile, and as though to evade the discussion of the other "count."

"I was thinking of what your friends would say about it."

"It is a very limited public, I assure you," said he, laughing, "and one which so implicitly trusts me, that I have only to say I have done what I believed to be right, to be confirmed in their good esteem."

The old lady was not to be put off by generalities, and she questioned him closely as to whether an overland passage did not cost a hundred pounds and upwards, and all but asked whether it was quite convenient to him to disburse that amount. She hinted something about an adage of people who "paid for their whistle," but suggested some grave doubts if they ever felt themselves recompensed in after time by recollecting the music that had cost so dearly; in a word, she made herself supremely disagreeable while he drank his tea, and only too glad to make his escape to go and sit beside Florry, and talk over again all they had said in the morning.

"Only think, Milly," said she, poutingly, as her sister entered, "how Aunt Grainger is worrying poor Joseph, and won't let him enjoy in peace the few days we are to have together."

But he did enjoy them, and to the utmost. Florence very soon threw off all trace of her late indisposition, and sought, in many ways, to make her lover forget all the pain she had cost him. The first week was one of almost unalloyed happiness; the second opened with the thought that the days were numbered. After Monday came Tuesday, then Wednesday, which preceded Thursday, when he was to leave.

How was it, they asked themselves, that a whole week had gone over? It was surely impossible! Impossible it must be, for now they remembered the mass of things they had to talk over together, not one of which had been touched on.

"Why, Joseph dearest, you have told me nothing about yourself. Whether you are to be in Calcutta, or up the country? Where, and how I am to write? When I am to hear from you? What of papa—I was going to say, our papa—would he like to hear from me, and may I write to him? Dare I speak to him as a daughter? Will he think me forward or indelicate for it? May I tell him of all our plans? Surely you ought to have told me some of these things! What could we have been saying to each other all this while?"

Joseph looked at her, and she turned away her head pettishly, and murmured something about his being too absurd. Perhaps he was; I certainly hold no brief to defend him in the case; convict or acquit him, dear reader, as you please.

And yet, notwithstanding this appeal, the next three days passed over just as forgetfully as their predecessors, and then came the sad Wednesday evening, and the sadder Thursday morning, when, wearied out and exhausted, for they had sat up all night—his last night—to say good-by.

"I declare he will be late again; this is the third time he has come back from the boat," exclaimed Miss Grainger, as Florence sank, half fainting, into Emily's arms.

"Yes, yes, dear Joseph," muttered Emily, "go now, go at once, before she recovers again."

"If I do not, I never can," cried he, as the tears coursed down his face, while he hurried away.

The monotonous beat of the oars suddenly startled the half-conscious girl; she looked up, and lifted her hand to wave an adieu, and then sank back into her sister's arms, and fainted.

Three days after, a few hurried lines from Loyd told Florence that he had sailed for Malta—this time irrevocably off. They were as sad lines to read as to have written. He had begun by an attempt at jocularity; a sketch of his fellow-travellers coming on board; their national traits, and the strange babble of tongues about them; but, as the bell rang, he dropped this, and scrawled out, as best he could, his last and blotted good-byes. They were shaky, ill-written words, and might, who knows, have been blurred with a tear or two. One thing is certain, she who read, shed many over them, and kissed them, with her last waking breath, as she fell asleep.

About the same day that this letter reached Florence, came another, and very different epistle, to the hands of Algernon Drayton, from his friend Calvert. It was not above a dozen lines, and dated from Alexandria:

"The Leander has just steamed in, crowded with snobs, civil and military, but no Loyd. The fellow must have given up his appointment or gone 'long sea.' In any case, he has escaped me. I am frantic. A whole month's plottings of vengeance scattered to the winds and lost! I'd return to England, if I were only certain to meet with him; but a Faquir, whom I have just consulted, says, 'Go east, and the worst will come of it!' and so I start in two hours for Suez. There are two here who know me, but I mean to caution them how they show it; they are old enough to take a hint.—Yours, "H. C.

"I hear my old regiment has mutinied, and sabred eight of the officers. I wish they'd have waited a little longer, and neither S. nor W. would have got off so easily. From all I can learn, and from the infernal fright the fellows who are going back, exhibit, I suspect that the work goes bravely on."

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXIX. LILY IS ACTUALLY AT HOME.

ONCE more Lily traversed the up-hill pavement, and marvelled at the great rolling turbulent gutters in the roadways: gutters which in those days often bore on their inky bosoms the carcases of defunct cats and dogs, that rolled past, swift and supine, towards the Infinite reserved for the beasts.

Once more she saw the clumsy oil-lamps slung on ropes across the streets, and smelt the faint odour of the melons and peaches, and the quicker aroma of the grapes from the fruiterers' shops. The way was by back streets, where there were few brilliant shops, full of gold and silver and jewels, and rich dresses, and beautiful pictures. But to the timid little hermit, just escaped from her thraldom, the narrow dirty streets of old Paris were ineffably charming. The great dishes full of wet partly-cooked spinach, like green mortar, in the greengrocers' shops; the giant pumpkins at the doors, some cleft in twain, and disclosing a voluptuous mine of golden squash and seedfulness within, that looked like the heads of grim Paynim warriors stricken off by the two-handed swords of doughty Crusaders; the eggs boiled in cochineal (as Madame Prudence explained) to make their shells red: "c'est pour distraire l'œil, mon enfant;" the long strings of dumpy little sausages, the shapely pigs' feet cunningly truffled, as though they had corns defiant of the skilfullest chiropodist; the other wonderful preparations of pork at the charcutiers'; the butchers' shops, with their marble dressers and gilt iron railings, and their scraggy but lively coloured show of meat; the glaring signboards; the dazzling show of pewter pitchers in the wine-shops; the ticket-porters dozing on their trucks, with their shirt-collars open, disclosing their shaggy, vein-corrugated necks; the throng of little boy soldiers with vacant faces and red legs; of priests in shovel-hats; of policemen with swords and cocked-hats; of moustached old women, very like the two Fates who came to card wool at the Pension, trolling monstrous barrows full of fruit or vegetables; the water-carriers with their pails; the alert little work-women with their trim white caps whisking along with their skirts thrown over one arm; the wonderful poodle-dogs with tufted tails and curling manes, like pacific lions of a smaller growth; the liquorice-water seller with his pagoda at his back hung with bells and banners, and his clean napkin and arsenal of bright tin mugs; the woman who sold the jumbles, and the man who sold metal taps; the wandering glazier with his cry of "Vitrier-e-e-e-er!" the old clothesman, no Jew he, but a stout Christian, who looked as though he had spent a good many years travelling in Galilee, and had begun to waver in his faith somewhat, crying, "Vieux habits, vieux galons!" the very beggars and blackguard little boys in torn blue blouses, who splashed in the gutters, or made faces behind the backs of the cocked-hatted policemen; all had charms for Lily. She could not help observing that most of the surrounding objects—animate as well as inanimate—were exceedingly dirty, and that the atmosphere was heavily laden with tobacco-smoke; but the entire spectacle was charming to her, nevertheless.

By-and-by, in the wane of the afternoon (for they had walked leisurely, and Madame Prudence had met several acquaintances, the majority bearing large baskets from which the stalks of vegetables protruded, or the heads of fowls dangled, and who were manifestly of the culinary calling), they crossed the great roaring Boulevard—which the housekeeper told Lily was an ocean of wickedness, and to be avoided, save on feast-days, when the good people came out as well as the bad—and entered a maze of streets much wider and cleaner, but much quieter. There were few shops, but many white walls, seeming to stretch onward for miles, and relieved only by jalousied windows and heavy portes cochères. Lily's heart sank within her. All looked older; but then all was as still and as gloomy as the stark and sepulchral suburb of Saint Philippe du Roule.

"Does the good lady—does Madame de Kergolay—keep a Pension?" she asked, nervously.

Madame Prudence could feel the little arm quivering within her own, and patted it again, reassuringly.

"Courage, my child!" she said, with a merry laugh. "Why, we have not the boldness of a guinea-pig. We have done with Pensions for good. No more classes, no more haricots, no more tasks and penitences, no more Marcassins! A Pension, my faith! Madame la Baronne de

Kergolay—a baroness, mind you, of the old stock, and not one of the day before yesterday—is a lady of ancient extraction, high rank, and ascertained position in society. She has had misfortunes, cruel and bitter misfortunes, but sooner than keep a Pension and suck the blood of young children, she would stand and sell matches at the corner of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. Yes, my child; suck their blood! That is what the Marcassin does. She is a real Count Ugolino."

A considerable period had apparently elapsed since Madame Prudence had perused the works of Dante. Lily, however, knew quite as little about Count Ugolino as the housekeeper did; and the assurance that Madame de Kergolay did not keep a school was quite sufficient for her.

The baroness lived in the Marais, in one of the tallest and oldest houses of that tall old quarter. It was a red brick house, too: almost as great a rarity in Paris as a stone house is in London. The entire mansion, Madame Prudence took care to inform Lily, belonged to the baroness: but she let it out in flats to respectable tenants, and reserved only one floor, the third, for her own use.

CHAPTER XXX. IN THE MARAIS.

If Madame de Kergolay had lived on a third floor in London, the altitude of her dwelling-place would have been accepted as primâ facially conclusive evidence of her impoverished circumstances. But indigence, in Paris, does not necessarily correspond with the number of stairs you have to mount to your abode; and, although the baroness's apartment was au troisième, it was spacious, comfortable, and even elegant.

Madame Prudence was short-winded, and, as she toiled up the staircase, uttered sundry invectives against a certain "Satané" asthma which troubled her. The Abbé Chatain would not have failed to reprove her for using so naughty an adjective; and of this eventuality Madame Prudence seemed herself aware, for, on the second landing, she objurgated the asthma with bated breath, and apostrophised it only as a "Cosaque." But she was very glad to rest awhile on this penultimate flight, while Lily gazed with admiration through an œil-de-bœuf casement on the vast panorama of slated roofs and chimney-stacks which stretched around and beneath her. The sweetly-savoured smoke from the wood fires curled in delicate violet hue against the clear blue sky; and the distant melody of a piano—played not as a school task, but for pleasure, for the instrumentalist carolled a lively ditty as he sang—came and smote her very sweetly on the ear. It was a simple matter to be pleased with, yet Lily felt as though she could have clapped her hands, and sung back again. Poor little creature! she had seen so little, as yet, of the only city in the world worth living in.

"I should like," she said, in airy prattle to her new found friend, "always to live here, and look through that window. See, there is a woman hanging out linen on a roof. Oh, if there were only some birds. There used to be birds at Miss Bunnycastle's."

"Bird yourself," rejoined the good-humoured housekeeper. "Silly little chatterer, you'd soon get tired of your bird's-eye view, I'll warrant. Yes, yes, there are better things to be seen within. Come! My respiration is a little restored. We will ring at the good lady's bell."

A lively piece of sculpture, in the likeness of a horse's forefoot, hung at the end of a silken cord by the side of a door whose central panel exhibited a brass plate, and, thereon, in very spiky and attenuated black letters, the words, "Madame la Baronne de Kergolay." Lily felt a slight tremor when she read "baroness." The remembrance of a former "countess" was rather conducive to a conviction on her part that she had had enough to do with titles of nobility for the term of her natural life.

A withered old man, very diminutive but with a very large head, and perhaps the thinnest pair of spindle-shanks ever seen out of a museum of anatomical preparations, opened the door, and grinned in a hospitable manner at the new comers.

"This is my brother Thomas," said Madame Prudence, introducing the little old man, "although you will oftener hear him addressed by his little name of Vieux Sablons. He is twenty years older than I; but in his youth was a furious gaillard. Even now il fait des farces. He is as upright as a dart, as strong as Hercules, and sain comme mon œil."

Thomas, otherwise Vieux Sablons, grinned so extensively while these praises were being bestowed on him that, in the mind of the timid, some fear might have arisen respecting the permanent cohesion of his superior and inferior jaws. This time, however, no divorce between the upper and lower portions of his head took place. The grin subsiding into a smirk, he shut the outer door behind the visitors, and ushered them into the interior of the premises.

Lily remarked that Thomas's large head, though quite bald on the summit, and very scantily furnished with thin locks about the ears, was plentifully powdered. He wore, moreover, earrings: at which, I take it, an English Jeames would have been astounded, if not scandalised. He was habited in a green livery coat, short in the waist, and shorter in the tails, shortest of all from a proportional point of view in the cuffs, and ornamented with a shoulder-knot of tarnished silver bullion. It was a coat worn to the very shabbiest, and scrupulously neat, and the large plated buttons had been so often polished that the armorial cognizance on them, as on a Louis the Fifteenth franc, was well-nigh defaced. Thomas's waistcoat had fallen likewise into the sere and yellow leaf—or, rather, the leaf that is sere without being yellow, for the original hue of the nankeen which formed its texture had,

through repeated ablutions, vanished. His green velvet nether garments, likewise, suggested to the observant spirit that they had originally formed the covering of a Utrecht sofa of the time of the First Empire, which had been very liberally sat upon by the beaux and belles of that epoch. He wore silk stockings of no particular colour, and, where they were not cobweb, his hose, like the late Sir John Cutler's, were one darn. Still, any little short-comings that might have been noticeable in his apparel were amply compensated by a prodigious pair of cut steel buckles in his shoes, and by a protruding shirt-frill or jabot: so white, so starched, and so stiff, that it gave him the appearance of a piece of Palissy-ware, cleaving with distended fin its way through life, like one of poor Bernard's perch through a dish.

"He wore that coat before the assembly of notables met," whispered Madame Prudence. "He was a running footman at Vieux Sablons. He has worn l'épée au côté—the sword by his side. Ah, the glad days!"

Anon they had passed through a cheerful dining-room with the usual floor of inlaid wood, light chintz hangings and furniture, and plenty of mirrors. At each of the three windows there was a glittering cage, and in each cage a canary was singing.

"Hao! it is better than the staircase," quoth Madame Prudence, slyly.

Lily thought so, indeed, when they came to the next room, the saloon, where the mirrors had richer frames—all tarnished, though—and where there were more birds, as many as four in a cage, and a beautiful globe full of gold and silver fish, and some stately pictures of ladies in hoops, and gentlemen with wigs and swords, and some older portraits of cavaliers in slouched hats and curled moustaches, and dames in ringlets and point lace. Here the furniture was of dark carved wood with elaborate cushions and backs in needlework.

"All Madame's doing," whispered the housekeeper. "She is an angel at her needle, but they were put together by the tapissier of the quarter. The old furniture was broken to pieces; the mirrors and the pictures my brother saved; but there's not a portrait without a bullet-hole or the gash of a knife in it, carefully mended; not a looking-glass frame but the glass itself has been smashed. What you see is nearly all that is left of the château of Vieux Sablons."

Again they went on, until Thomas, lifting up a heavy drapery of old tapestry veiling a door, tapped discreetly at it. His large head disappeared in the hangings, but he speedily withdrew it, and turned it towards the visitors with a reassuring grin.

"Madame will receive," he said. "She is not saying her breviary. Go in, my children."

Lily observed, as he retired, that, although he was as "upright as a dart," the gait of Vieux Sablons was very feeble, and he hobbled.

Madame Prudence seemed to divine the girl's thoughts.

"Yes," she said, with pleasant pride. "Thomas is of a certain age. He is no longer in his first youth. He is eighty, and for sixty-five years, man and boy, has been in the service of the family. But he is agile. Oh! he is alert. Ma parole d'honneur, I think he could dance the gavotte as well as Monsieur Vestris."

But here Madame Prudence was inwardly reminded that priests' housekeepers have no right to be critical on the execution of so mundane a performance as the gavotte, and she was for a moment covered with confusion. She muttered, however, something about the old thoughts that had come into her head through the presence of young people, and, pushing aside the drapery, led Lily in.

They found themselves in a neat smiling little room that was half boudoir and half bedchamber, the walls hung with antique tapestry in which shepherds and shepherdesses, brave with ribbons—for their very crooks and the necks of their sheep were hung with the parti-coloured products of the loom—were grinning as affably upon all comers as Thomas, yclept Vieux Sablons. Their smiles had somewhat faded from the stitches which years agone had been fixed in perpetual cachinnation by busy fingers now fleshless in the tomb, but they continued to grin valorously. As though there had really ever been such a place as Arcadia, as though the real names of Corydon and Phillis had not been Colin and Margot, who had pined in rags and penury, and fed on black bread (and, when that was scarce, on boiled grass), while the beaux in wigs had been writing epigrams to the belles in hoops at the tall-roofed château yonder. As though the château had never been burnt down by Corydons and Phillises infuriated by famine and oppression. As though there had never been a guillotine erected in permanency at the Mairie, a desecrated parish church, a broken cross, and a Reign of Terror. And the shepherds and shepherdesses went on smiling, in a third floor in the Marais, as they had once smiled in the great hall of Vieux Sablons.

There were more birds in this room; and their diversified twittering was, to tell truth, somewhat embarrassing to the newly-arrived stranger. One soon grew accustomed, however, to a riot which of all riots is the most tolerable. There was a dwarfish coffee-coloured pug-dog, too, of the breed called "carlin"—a detestable little beast with a red leather collar hung with bells, and a face like that of a negro pugilist (who had lost the fight) seen through the small end of an opera-glass. This pet and treasure yapped and japped about the room, and at first seemed inclined to cultivate a hostile acquaintance with Lily's ankles—dear me! how very late in the day I am in telling you that our solitary one had begun to have ankles, and that they were very shapely—but was soon recalled to order by a mild voice; a voice which addressed him now as "little tyrant," and now as "little cherished one."

On a cushion of tambour-work, which was moved about as the sun's rays affected different strips of the flooring, couched, grave and magisterial, and with a frill of fur like an Elizabethan ruff round his neck, a monstrous Angora cat. It was said, long ago, that no human being could ever have been as wise as Thurlow *looked;* but the impenetrable sagacity of the Angora's countenance would have reduced the chancellor, wig, seals, and all, to idiotcy by contrast. The Angora cat's name was Miriflon.

In this room there was a handsome circular table of marqueterie, laden with books, with flowers, with needlework. There were cunning little green silk screens to subdue the light and the heat of the fire, which, notwithstanding the warmth of the weather, was crackling on the polished andirons of the roomy chimney. In a far-off alcove there was a bed: looking more, however, like a vast ottoman: with a faultlessly adjusted counterpane of quilted crimson silk.

By the work-table, a screen before her eyes, in a long low invalid chair, reclined a very old lady, whose hair was like undressed, but highly bleached, flax; whose lineaments seemed to have been cut in marble; whose complexion was soft and clear as virgin wax. Her hands, Lily noticed, were as white as the Marcassin's; but they were mild hands, gentle hands, innocent hands, hands that closed only when they were clasped in prayer, that opened only to give something away. She was clad in grey silk, and a kind of laced kerchief was tied under her head. She wore spectacles, and she had not a tooth in her head; but she looked, for all that, very like a saint.

"Kiss her, my child," whispered Madame Prudence.

Lily trembled all over: and, she scarcely knew why, her eyes filled with tears. Then, by an involuntary movement, she crept down to her knees, and took the lady's hand, which was soft and glossy, and, holding it between her own, gently kissed it.

The lady disengaged her hand and patted the brown curls nestling by her.

"And so you are to be my little pet bird," she said, in a low yet silvery shrill voice. "We are very good friends already, I can see. Monsieur l'Abbé has told me all about you. You have nothing to fear here, Lily Floris."

To Lily's inexpressible delight the lady spoke English—her own pure, sonorous, native tongue; at which Madame Prudence, not understanding a word, looked on in highly critical admiration.

Madame de Kergolay smiled at the girl's ill-concealed astonishment.

"Don't be afraid," she continued; "this is not a Pension Anglaise. You are surprised to hear me speak your language. Well, it is partly mine. I am English by descent, though not by birth. My grand-nephew, whom you will see some of these days (the scamp), is English from head to foot. Yes; I come of an English family—have you never heard of the Greyfaunts of Lancashire? No, you are too young—but I was born in France. My father was exiled in the '45 for his attachment to the true king, and I was brought up by the English Benedictines—ah! the good sisters—in Paris; and when I left the convent I married Monsieur de Kergolay." She sighed as she spoke, and turned to a portrait supported on a little easel near her. It represented a handsome gentleman with powdered locks, but with a full dark moustache, who wore a white uniform coat with blue facings, and the cross of St. Louis at the button-hole. "Yes," the baroness murmured. "He was the bravest captain in his regiment, and the bravest gentleman in all Brittany. Nay, I libel them: the Bretons are all brave, and there is none bravest."

She was given to ramble sometimes in her discourse, and an unusual flow of volubility was succeeded by a silence somewhat blank. Madame Prudence beckoned Lily away.

"We will leave her a little while," whispered the good housekeeper. "She is easily fatigued. Madame is of a great age. Figure to yourself, my dear: eighty-six. She is weak, but ah! she has the courage of a Mousquetaire Gris in her."

"She is a very beautiful old lady, and I am sure she is good," Lily said, thoughtfully.

"You are right, little seer," returned the housekeeper, tapping the girl familiarly under the chin. "Beauty like hers laughs at time. Now it is a lantern, very clear and pellucid, through which her beautiful soul shines. The abbé says that she will be asked few questions on the great voyage. Her papers are all in order. Do you know that M. l'Abbé Edgeworth, who confessed the martyr king, gave her absolution himself when, with six of her old governesses, the Benedictines, she was mounting the fatal tumbril that was to convey her to the scaffold? And it was only by a miracle she escaped."

"Poor lady," murmured Lily. "How beautiful she must have been."

"Beautiful!" repeated Madame Prudence. "Ah! her beauty has gone through rude trials. Fire and famine and slaughter, insult and torture, captivity exile poverty, and hunger. And now, with the exception of her graceless grand-nephew, she is left quite alone."

"Why, I am quite alone too," quoth Lily, simply.

"Poor little lamb! I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. There! You are to be no longer alone. Madame la Baronne will love you very dearly, and Vieux Sablons will take as much care of you as though you were Azor the pug-dog, or Miriflon the cat, and I will come and see you whenever I can spare half an hour; and, bless my heart, here is Babette, the femme de chambre, who will show you the little room that is to be yours. And now, really, I must kiss you and bid you good-by, or my dear abbé will think I am lost."

And Madame Prudence, confiding Lily to the care of Babette, who was a homely woman of

middle age, with a port-wine stain on her face, was as good as her word, and bustled away.

Babette took Lily into a charming little bedroom, all rustling in white dimity draperies. Ah! so different from that dreadful hole at the Marcassin's. She showed Lily a coquettish little bed, and a wardrobe where her linen and clothes were arranged; and then, to the girl's great astonishment, the homely Babette sat down on the bed and began to cry.

"Don't mind me," she said in French, wiping her eyes. "I'm not going to hate you or to be jealous of you. But I am low-spirited this morning. Je pensais après mon homme là-bas: I was thinking about my husband, yonder."

Lily could not help thinking Babette a very strange woman, but she forbore to vex her by interruption.

"Is it through——" Babette was about to say "charity," but she checked herself; "is it pour l'amour du bon Dieu that you are going to stay with us?"

Lily felt herself blushing crimson, but she answered steadily: "I am quite alone, and poor, and was very unhappy where I lived, till M. l'Abbé Chatain brought me away: and I know that Madame de Kergolay is very charitable."

The homely woman had a brawny fist. She doubled it, and brought it down with a thump on the bed.

"Charitable?" she repeated. "She's a saint. Don't think I wish to shame you. I am the lowest of the low, a creature of shame, la dernière des dernières;" and she began to weep afresh.

Lily did her best to console her, but the most efficacious balsam to be applied to a wounded spirit seemed, in the case of the homely woman, to be the doubling of her fist again. She brought it down with renewed force on the counterpane.

"Look you well here, little one," she exclaimed. "This house has more mercy in it than the Hôtel-Dieu—than Bicêtre—than any house on earth. My man, my husband, it is very certain was a villain—Claude Gallifet, called Claquedents. An abominable man. Do you see that scar on my forehead? That was where he knocked me down with his adze, as a butcher knocks down the bœuf-gras. Observe it well. The blow went through my skull as though it had been of paper. Do you see this gap in my mouth? That is where Claquedents knocked three of my teeth down my throat. My breath is almost as short as the Dame Prudence's. But I have no asthma. I pant because Claude jumped on me, and broke two of my ribs. But I loved that man there. Do you understand?"

Lily was bewildered, and knew not what to say. She bowed her head.

"If he was bad," the woman continued, "I was bad. If he was a robber, I was a receiver of stolen goods. I tell you I loved him. Well! If he did commit the burglary by night, I helped him. I made the skeleton keys for him, and the list slippers, so that he should not be heard. Ce n'est pas moi qui l'ai conseillé de tuer le bourgeois," she muttered, in a lower tone, and halted, and looked at Lily, and breathed hard.

The girl was shuddering.

"The bourgeois did not die," Babette went on, gloomily. "Otherwise, Claquedents would have been guillotined. Well, they sent him to Toulon for life. He is there now, with a red nightcap, and chained to another villain. N'en parlons plus."

"I was tried with him," she resumed. "They were merciful to me because I was a woman, and I had but two years' seclusion. I came out of prison to do what? To starve. 'Get up,' said the police one day. 'Lie down,' they cried the next. 'Go here, go there, where are your papers?' I had none, and no bread. I tell you I had no bread. They would not take me in at the hospital. I was so strong, they said. I had had a child. That died while I was in the prison. I begged a sou one night, and paid the toll on to the Pont des Arts to drown myself. The Abbé Chatain met me. He gave me money for a bed. He told Madame about me. I was received in an institution where saints, such as she, gather together wretches such as I. I worked very hard. I showed that I could be honest. Good God! I never stole anything but when I wanted bread, or when my man told me. At last I came here. I am housekeeper. I have the care of the plate. I could strangle Madame, who is as helpless as a child, when I put her to bed. Vieux Sablons does not know my story. The Dame Prudence, even, only knows, from the abbé, that I was poor. Nothing more. But I tell you—because you are young and have been miserable—think of me, and bless God that you ever came into this house."

"And your husband?" Lily said, lifting her great eyes in wonderment to the woman's face.

"Speak no more of him," she returned. "If he were to escape, or to be released, I declare that I would kill myself. I love him, and a month after we had met we should be at the Dépôt of the Préfecture again, for robbery. You will never hear anything more about this from me. Go! I see you are good. I am not about to be jealous of you." And Babette got off the bed, smoothed out the indentations made by her fist, and very composedly proceeded to fill the ewer from a large brass pitcher.

When Lily was left alone, she ventured to open the wardrobe, and found that the mean and patched apparel she had brought from the Pension Marcassin had been supplemented by a store of linen, morning wrappers, and other feminine gear, which, to her unaccustomed eyes, appeared inexpressibly spruce and smart. There was little finery among the stock; there were neither silks nor satins; but to the whilom Cinderella the few drawers seemed to contain the treasures of the Indies. She had never seen such nice clothes since the well-remembered afternoon when Cutwig and Co. fitted her out.

Presently came Vieux Sablons with a tap at

her door, to tell her, with as conciliatory a grin as usual, that Madame would again receive her. She followed him, timidly, but with a happy reliance gradually growing upon her. Everything told her that in this house she had nothing to fear.

Madame de Kergolay bade Lily come very close, and kissed her on the forehead.

"I am a very weak suffering old woman, my darling," she said, "and constant pain makes me cross and irritable, sometimes. When I scold you (which will not be often, I hope), you must smile and kiss me. When I scold Vieux Sablons, he rubs the buttons of his coat with his sleeve; which relieves him. Formerly he used to whistle, but I prohibited that, as an impertinence. And now you must sit down on that little stool by my feet, and tell me everything about yourself. I need not ask you for the truth. It is written in your face."

It was, indeed. The girl drew the stool close to the old lady's chair, and, her brown curls nestling amongst the draperies of her protectress, told, in artless simplicity, the short and sorrowful story of her life. There were no startling incidents, no romantic episodes. It was a mean, common-place little tale; but Madame de Kergolay shed tears as she listened to it.

"You have been very unhappy, my child," she began, when Lily had ended. "Let us pray that the dark days are over, and that the bright time is coming. In His inscrutable wisdom and mercy, the Almighty is often pleased to afflict most sorely those of His creatures who seem least deserving of his anger. You have had, indeed, to suffer two most terrible deprivations. No father to protect, no mother to cherish and fondle you! Ah! poor little lamb! my heart bleeds for you. But we must see what a feeble, bedridden invalid can do to console you; yes, we must try to make you as happy as the day is long."

"There is only one thing that I am afraid of, madame," faltered Lily.

"And what is that, my child?"

"If the lady—the strange lady—the one who was called countess—should find me out? If she went to Mademoiselle Marcassin's, and discovered where I was! Oh! it would be dreadful."

"Foolish little thing. After deserting you so long, it is not probable that she will care to inquire about you. If she be indeed your mother, she must be a cruel and hard-hearted woman—a scandal to her sex. But I cannot believe that any mother could be so inhuman. No, no; she must be some wicked and intriguing woman, who, to further bad designs of her own, has been endeavouring to alienate you from your real parents. Let us think no more about her. Justice, divine or human, must, sooner or later, overtake a creature so abandoned. Let us indulge in hopes, rather, that some day the two gentlemen who placed you at the school at Clapham, and one of whom must have been your father, may be met with. But, until they do come forward, and under any circumstances, you are not the less to be my dear adopted child."

They had much converse that afternoon; and an impertinent little alabaster clock on the mantelpiece had proclaimed, in a voice very much resembling the barking of a very weak little puppy, that it was six o'clock, when Vieux Sablons (who had bestowed a fresh sprinkling of powder on his bald pate in honour of the occasion) announced that Madame was served, and that dinner was ready.

Madame, alas! could not walk to her evening meal; but as she obstinately refused to be treated so much like an invalid as to be served in her bedchamber, she was slowly wheeled in her chair to the salle-à-manger. The six o'clock dinner was one of the few links that bound her to the every-day world; and, whether she dined alone or in company, the ceremonious announcement of the banquet was made by Vieux Sablons, and her modest repast was served up in the apartment specially provided for the purpose.

The dinner was a very simple, but a very nice one. They had a soup with bread in it, a little of the gravy beef with a sharp sauce, a couple of dishes of vegetables, a roast chicken, and some cream cheese. The only evidences of luxury were in the wine, which was a rare and odoriferous Bordeaux, and in the dessert, at which a magnificent melon made its appearance. Everything pertaining to the service of the table was scrupulously clean, and of originally costly material, but everything had plainly seen better days. The tablecloth and napkins were damask, but worn to the cord, and as elaborately darned as Vieux Sablons's stockings. The plate was silver, but rubbed to the last degree of thinness. The dessert porcelain was old Sèvres, but cracked and riveted in dozens of places. Every article, in fact, from the napkin-holders to the salad-bowl, seemed to have undergone some terrible shipwreck, but to have been rescued from the wreckers' hands, and carefully put together again.

Vieux Sablons was footman, and butler, and parlour-maid. He solemnly drew the bottle of Bordeaux, and presented the encrimsoned cork on a battered little salver of silver to his mistress, who examined and dismissed it approvingly, saying that the good Haut Brion showed, as yet, no signs of deterioration. He carved the melon with a silver knife and fork in a very imposing manner, and brought on the two silver sconces containing lighted candles of yellow wax, with an air worthy of a sacristan, or of a gentleman of the chamber to the Great King.

"We do things pretty well in a third floor of the Marais, hein, little ma'amselle?" he remarked, with pardonable complacency, as he lighted Lily to her chamber.

The girl said that everything was beautifully comfortable.

"With regard to comfort," replied Vieux Sablons, slightly piqued, "I don't care about it. I know it not, the comfortable. It concerns me not. It belongs to the revolutionaries. I alluded to the style. Do you approve of it?"

Lily hastened to assure him that she regarded the style as perfect.

"That's right, little ma'amselle," returned the ancient servitor, nodding his head in grave satisfaction. "We are au troisième, it is true, but still we perform our functions here in the way they were performed before the evil times. The bulk of our fortune, alas! we have lost, but we contrive to exist, and to keep up our style on crumbs. You see that our forks and spoons are still of silver?"

Yes, Lily had noticed that.

"The days have been," Vieux Sablons continued, "when I have had the honour to serve Madame and her guests entirely off silver, ay, and off silver-gilt. But what would you have? The accursed revolution has ruined all. The Gauls triumph. Poor France!"

"Poor Madame de Kergolay!" murmured Lily, softly.

"You are right, my child," said the old man. "We keep up our style, and there is that scamp of a grand-nephew, and Madame is an angel to the poor, and all upon ten thousand francs a year. And the manor of Vieux Sablons alone was once worth a million."

"A million!" echoed Lily, who had scarcely ever heard of so large a sum of money.

"A million! 'Tis I who say it to you. Now we are reduced to ten thousand miserable francs. The appointments of an employé, quoi! But I tell you what," the old man, in his thin pipe continued, clenching a trembling hand; "the day that our funds begin to fail us, and Madame says, 'Vieux Sablons, we must sell the silver, and dine with one course instead of three, or I shall have no bread to give to my poor,' that day I will beg, that day I will thieve for the House of Kergolay."

"But Madame would be angry," Lily gently pleaded.

"Very well, very well. I have another resource. I will go to a bureau de remplaçants and sell myself as a substitute for one drawn in the conscription. That is a thousand francs. France always wants men; and I am strong—oh! I am strong yet. Good night, little ma'amselle."

Poor Vieux Sablons! He was nearly eighty, and would not have made, I fear, a very stalwart grenadier.

THE FENIAN BROTHERS.

Not long ago a meeting was held in the Rotundo at Dublin to express the indignation of Young Ireland at a vote of the Dublin corporation, which gave a site upon College-green for a statue to the late Prince Consort. But although Young Ireland was left in quiet possession of that meeting, it did not choose to be quiet. There was no proud Saxon to lay low, so, at the mention of a name welcome to some patriots, but unwelcome to others, uprose a band of Fenians, tore off the legs of chairs and tables, smartly applied them to the heads of brother patriots, carried the platform by storm, and waved triumphantly the green tablecloth of Erin over a mad hullabaloo. This was a grand exhibition of the materials for that peculiar joint-stock society, "the Fenian Brotherhood," promoted by a few sharpers for the profitable cultivation of Irish flats. Appeal is made to the unreasoning love of a row still common among the uneducated Irish. The Irish faction against the English faction! Whew! what a grand fight it'll be! It would "electrify the world," says the editor of the Chicago Fenian, and it would be "one of the grandest events in history, because it would necessarily involve the overthrow of an Imperial system greater than any the world has seen since the fall of the Roman, perhaps greater than the Roman itself." If Hungary overthrew Austria, he goes on to show, five centuries hence, general history would give only five pages to the fact. If Poland overthrew Russia, five pages would be more than enough to tell that tale: But the overthrow of the British Empire, that would be grand indeed! The day Irishmen humble the haughty crest of England, they chain the glory of Ireland for ever to the stars. To this eloquent prophecy is added, "Who can doubt the ultimate success of a cause, the undying faith in which is cherished in the hearts of a people from father to son, and evident by acts time and again significant as the following:—" The following fact being, that the brothers John Patrick and Edward Gaffney have sent to the Irish National Fair, Chicago, "two pairs of boots, patent leather and morocco tops." Surely these patent leather boots of the Gaffneys, wherewith England is defied, are sublimer than the boots of Bombastes, that were not chained to the stars, but only hung from a tree:

> Whoever dare these boots displace,
> Must meet Bombastes face to face!

But what *is* the Irish National Fair, Chicago, to which it is so glorious a thing to have sent two pairs of patent leather boots with morocco tops? Well; Chicago, on Lake Michigan, at the mouth of the Chicago River, is the chief city of Illinois, of which the growth during the last thirty years has been so rapid as to be wonderful even in America. Ten years ago it was the largest primary grain depôt in the world, and its population, now of about a hundred and ten thousand, has trebled since that time. It trades with three thousand miles of coast line on the lakes, and has navigable water communication with the Mississippi and the sea: so that it can load a vessel at its wharves either for New Orleans or for Liverpool. Among the Irishmen in this town of Chicago, the "Fenian Brotherhood" professes to have its head-quarters. Here, certain flats and sharpers held in November last what was called the "First General Congress of the Fenian Brotherhood," whereat they resolved that this "Brotherhood" should be a fixed and permanent institution in America, with a head centre, state centres, and centres of circles; and that the object of its members should be "to gird their loins silently and

sternly for the inevitable struggle that is approaching." This organisation in Chicago is opposed by the bishop of the Irish Catholics, as it is opposed in Ireland and America by the main body of the bishops and priests of the Irish Catholic Church, except only a few men like Father Lavelle, who described Prince Albert at the Rotundo meeting as "a German reviler of our creed and country, and the husband of a foreign queen." Oppressed as their Church truly is by a dominant Protestant establishment, which is the genuine cause of more than half the bad blood of the country, its honest efforts to check the "Young Irish" party in its wild course of sedition have been unintermitting, and made at some sacrifice of popular influence. Let us give to faithful servants of Christ who are not of our own communion, the honour due to them herein for Christian work. The Chicago Fenians scout the admonitions of their Bishop Duggan. "When the old world harness," says one magnificent spirit, "is attempted to be buckled tightly upon the Americanised Catholic mind, and the gear once fails, as in the case of the Fenians, it may as well be returned to the lumber-room, or used only for docile females and quiet old men, who from long training will not grow restive in the traces. We regard the Fenians as having achieved their first great step in the elevation of Irish nationality, by teaching a lesson to the priesthood which they will never forget, and the first of a series which, once taken, the rest will follow." The Americanised Irish sharper fully developed into a Fenian leader, is a most eloquent creature; "rough he is, so air our bars; wild he is, so air our buffalers; but his glorious answer to the tyrant and the despot is, that his bright home is in the setting sun." Hear, for example, one of the two great managers of Fenian finance at Chicago, Messrs. Michael and John Scanlan, proposing at a "Fenian banquet," on Saint Patrick's Day, "the Day we Celeberate" (spelling is not one of the strong points of the Chicago Fenian and National Fair Gazette, wherefrom we quote), hear him tell how "our glorious pagan ancestry, rising above the things of earth, plucked the very sun from heaven, placed it in their banner, and marched to victory beneath its beams," or hear him praise the United States, and quote the Americanised Shakespeare. "States, where men walk earth in the light of freedom, with nothing twixt their souls and heaven, until the kings and titled nobility of earth appear as pigmies,

Cutting up such fantastic pranks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep."

All hail to Messrs. Michael and John Scanlan! These seem to have been the gentlemen who got up the other day at Chicago a Fenian Irish National Fair, which began on Easter Monday, and was to have a season of a week. There were sold for a dollar apiece season tickets of admission. "One dollar," said the announcement, "one dollar will aid the holiest cause that ever engaged the heart and brain of man," besides giving a chance of winning one of a thousand prizes to be drawn for: a rosewood piano, a diamond-cased lady's gold hunting-watch, a fine French clock, a silver plated tea set, a meerschaum pipe, a sewing-machine, a dozen fiddles, five boxes of Havanas, two dozen sets of heavy plated spoons, or a marble bust of General Corcoran. Gifts of all kinds were to be sent from all parts for sale at the Fenian Fair, and the proceeds—ah, well, they would be invested in U. S. bonds until wanted.

These patriotic people call themselves a "Fenian Brotherhood," because Irish tradition says that the Fenians were an old national militia employed to protect the Irish coasts from all foreign invaders. Each of the four provinces is said to have had its band or clan, Fionn and Oisin (Fingal and Ossian) being chiefs of one of the clans with which the other clans fought, till the institution came to its end pretty much in the same way as the meeting did the other day in the Rotundo. But there were Fenians in Scotland and North Germany as well as in Ireland, and, in fact, there is good reason to suppose that they were a distinct tribe of those Celts who preceded the Germanic races in occupation of the North German and Scandinavian shores. No matter for that. Tradition connects them with the best of the early Irish poetry as the home militia and coast-guard, composed of men of miraculous attainments: so nimble that they could walk over rotten sticks without breaking them: so fleet that each of them could outstrip in the race all "the rest" of his comrades: so brave that any one of them counted it equal battle to fight nine of any other nation. So here we have the Fenians again, though the boldest of them don't hold by the old traditional rule that prevented her militia from passing out of Ireland; and in America they take one John O'Mahony to be their Finn M'Coul.

The professed object of this band of brothers is the national freedom of Ireland. The congress of November last, began by proclaiming its determination to uphold the laws and constitution of the United States; it then went on to say that, in consequence of the hostile attitude assumed by the English oligarchy, merchants, and the press, towards the United States since the beginning of the civil war, hostilities between the two countries is imminent; and they resolved that the younger members of the Brotherhood be drilled so as to be prepared to offer their services to the United States when these begin their war with England. Ireland at present being the vanguard of America against British aggression, "her organised sons keeping watch and ward for the United States at the thresholds of the despots of Europe, nay in their very citadels," it was resolved that the Brotherhood is open to every man who is loyal to the principles of self-government, and will oppose the emissaries of foreign despotisms who would feign (Fenian spelling again) crush the growth of republican principles, and stop the onward march of freedom. The preamble to another

resolution admits the existence of dissension among the Brotherhood, and it is therefore resolved that American politics and religious questions shall be excluded from their councils. It asserts that it is not a secret, nor an oath-bound, society; and, as certain circles have adopted a form of pledge capable of giving colour to a contrary assertion, the following form is recommended for general adoption:

"I —— solemnly pledge my sacred word and honour as a truthful and honest man, that I will labour with earnest zeal for the liberation of Ireland from the yoke of England, and for the establishment of a free and independent government on Irish soil; that I —— will implicitly obey the commands of my superior officers in the Fenian Brotherhood; that I will faithfully discharge the duties of my membership, as laid down in the Constitution and By-Laws thereof; that I will do my utmost to promote feelings of love, harmony, and kindly forbearance among all Irishmen; and that I will foster, defend and propagate the aforesaid Fenian Brotherhood to the utmost of my power."

The statement that the Brotherhood is not a secret or oath-bound society, put forth to evade, if possible, the opposition of the Irish clergy, can hardly be reconciled with a subsequent admission that there is an "inner circle," an unnamed council of ten, who direct the proceedings of the Brotherhood, and who are not called upon "to make any report as to the methods and means by which they are endeavouring to carry forward the avowed ends of the Brotherhood." The Bishops of Pennsylvania and Chicago having denounced the Brotherhood, a deputation was appointed to wait on the latter, with whom a conversation took place, much too long to be given even in substance. The bishop, however, said that they had a most atrocious oath, and for that reason he had refused to send their contributions in aid of the poor in Ireland. That Archbishop McHale had accepted this money sent through another channel did not surprise him, on the contrary, it would have surprised him if he hadn't. The bishop further said that Mr. Smith O'Brien was opposed to such societies; that the leaders of the Brotherhood were unknown to him, that their actions "are not sufficiently before us to know what they are doing. *And we do not know what is done with the money raised in this society.*" The italics occur in the report. Finally, the bishop pronounced that the British government in Ireland is a legal government, and that it is a crime against the Church to attempt to overthrow it.

As to the sentiments and present position of the Irish race abroad and at home, we are told that it is pervaded by a profound love of Ireland, and "by an intense and undying hatred towards the monarchy and oligarchy of Great Britain, which have so long ground their country to the dust, hanging her patriots, starving out her people, and sweeping myriads of Irish men, women, and children off their paternal fields, to find a refuge in foreign lands," and that the best way of gratifying the hatred of Great Britain is, for Irishmen to cultivate brotherly feeling, good will, and mutual forbearance. Fenians who are not yet aware of the fact, will be glad to learn that the "men of Irish birth and lineage now dwelling on the American continent, hold, at present, a more powerful position among the peoples of the earth, in point of numbers, political privileges, social influence and military strength, than was ever before held by any exiled portion, not alone of the Irish nation, but of any subjugated nation whatsoever;" while in the very same document they are told that, "in the hard battle of the exile's life the race is dying out, and the present moment is that in which the Irish element has reached its greatest development." The final resolution is given in the boldest type, and runs thus: "THAT WE DECLARE THE SAID IRISH PEOPLE TO CONSTITUTE ONE OF THE DISTINCT NATIONALITIES OF THE EARTH, AND AS SUCH JUSTLY ENTITLED TO ALL THE RIGHTS OF SELF-GOVERNMENT."

But this absurd society must be more numerous in America than an Englishman with fair regard for Irish sense would imagine, or we should not have Mr. Blair, the Postmaster-General of the United States, writing to the Secretary in this style:

"Washington, February 9th, 1864.

"Cor. Sec. I. N. Fair.

"DEAR SIR,—Herewith I send you a cheque for twenty-five dollars as a small contribution to the Irish National Fair. I have always sympathised warmly with Ireland, and rejoice in the conviction, which daily grows stronger, that the days of her oppressor—the haughty and heartless British aristocracy, are numbered. To the cold-blooded, calculating policy of this odious class we owe the planting of slavery on this continent, and consequently all the horrors we have witnessed in the war which now shakes the continent. Let us triumph in this struggle, and there will soon be an end put to the sway of the oppressors of Ireland, and both parties so understand it, for whilst the Irish with the gallant Mulligan, Meagher, and other true sons of Ireland are armed for the cause of free government, the British aristocracy, with scarcely an exception, openly sympathise with the rebels, and this, notwithstanding their affected horror of slavery, for the perpetuation of which the rebels are fighting. "Yours truly,

"M. BLAIR."

The governor of Illinois writes in a similar strain, and Fernando Wood, the member of the House of Representatives, sends a cheque for a hundred dollars, and says: "I would give all I am worth, if, by so doing, I could advance the cause of Irish nationality to a successful completion." The Hon. Fernando probably means all he possesses. His expression, carried out literally, would not add much to the funds of the society. The senator from Michigan gives his sympathy to the movement. The governor of

Minnesota sends a contribution with a letter, in which he says he is "for the freedom and nationality of Ireland." Colonel Mulligan, writing from the Head-Quarters of the Second Division, sends a hundred dollars, and will, when the union of the States is solidly settled, give his assistance in establishing Irish nationality. Brigadier-General Julius White, writing with exceeding bitterness against those statesmen who rise in their Legislative Halls (meaning the British Houses of Parliament) and encourage and defend the traitorous villains who are making America flow with blood, prophesies that Irishmen fighting Freedom's battle shall yet hear its thunders on their native shore. The Speaker of the House of Representatives is a contributor to the amount of twenty dollars. Major-General Pleasanton is another; so also is Brigadier-General Montgomery, whose donation is accompanied with the charitable hope that, "with the blessings of Providence, not only our individual but national efforts may teach England a salutary lesson of retributional justice, resulting in securing to Ireland the inalienable boon, &c." Sundry soldiers of the United States army do not limit the testimony of their sympathy to mere words, but send contributions ranging in amount from one to five dollars.

A great meeting of the Brotherhood was held in California, at which a Mr. Mooney acknowledged that he had always found Englishmen hospitable, just, and generous, but, as regards Ireland, that "every year the people raise abundant food from their soil—but every year the ships of her oppressors come into her harbours, and, like buccaneers, carry off by force the food which Providence has planted in her rich soil for her inhabitants, and her people are obliged to put round the hat in helpless mendicancy to the world. But they have vowed on the top of Slivenamon, in Ireland, to beg food no longer, to petition the Queen of England no longer, but to arise, organise, and on the gory field assert their independence. They may rise or they may fall, but they will never beg again. (Great cheering.) Mr. Mooney said he was good for one rifle, and there were twenty thousand Irishmen in California who could and would each of them send a rifle to Ireland, yea, even their brave hearts." He concluded a stirring address by suggesting "an immediate commencement of the work, and the sending to the fair at Chicago a golden brick and a few silver bricks of California metal. (Cheers.)"

At this meeting it was announced that Miles D. Sweney was willing to contribute one thousand dollars to the cause. This was the signal for a great outburst of applause, and "three cheers were given for Miles, who was immediately voted the bulliest of the contributors." In return for a contribution of five hundred and seven dollars from the Ninetieth Illinois Regiment, the editor of the Fenian prays that "when the terrible day of reckoning with England comes, God in his infinite goodness may vouchsafe that these noble veterans may have the full measure of their desire granted—to be in at the settlement." The men of another regiment are only waiting the termination of the American war to "flesh their bayonets in corpulent Mr. Bull."

Among the articles contributed by Ireland to the fair are three photographic portraits by the venerable Archbishop McHale; "a Whole Irishman" sends a moire antique gent's vest; others send a piece of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's coffin; a pocket-handkerchief; an Irish MS.; a few numbers of Punch; sundry '98 pikes and shillelaghs; a jar of whisky which had not paid the excise duty; a bog-oak negligé; a copy of a letter from France on Irish bravery; a sword picked up on Bunker's Hill by an Irish-English soldier; a pistol used in '98; a lump of stone, on which the broken treaty was signed by the illustrious Sarsfield; a bird's-eye view of the Protestant Reformation; a pair of lady's boots worked with a '98 pike; a Scotch claymore taken in Wexford in '98; a large doll, dressed as the Tipperary man's dark-haired Mary; a sod off Wolf Tone's grave; a watch-pocket, worked by a lady who hopes that it will be worn next a manly heart, that fondly throbs for Fatherland; a portrait of St. Patrick; a horn of a Mangerton stag; a bit of the Atlantic cable; a photograph of Emmett in one of his pensive moods; a pair of rose-coloured cork slippers; a flag, which "has been noticed by some of our alien rulers in both Houses of Parliament as a most rebel flag, with language in an unknown tongue;" a gross of pies "specially manufactured for the fair;" a curious bone, found on the island of Inchidonny; "the crowbar used by the drummer bailiff when he headed the crowbar brigade in this district in the years '46—'48." This is the gift of one of the brigade, who has repented of his share in the cruel work of desolation, by which so many a cheerful homestead has been left a sightless ruin, and numbers of people have been driven from their homes, and forced to fly to foreign lands or to the workhouse, where at that time certain death awaited them. There has been sent also a grand blackthorn stick cut from over the graves of the ancient Britons buried in Ireland. A large number of odd volumes of books were contributed. "Donations of food in any quantity," it was announced, "will be gratefully received. Beef, mutton, lamb, veal, bacon, ham, pork, sausages, fowls, turkeys, geese, chickens, game, raw or cooked, fish and vegetables of all sorts, cakes and pickles, fruit and vinegar, anything, in fact, that will tend to the comfort of the visitors and the increase of the receipts, and the further it has to travel and the greater the quantity, the more highly it will be valued."

The fair was to be opened by the governor of Illinois, and for the entertainment of visitors there were to be theatrical performances, concerts, lectures, &c. &c. "Ireland's gifted daughter," Miss T. Esmonde, was to give poetical and patriotic readings; "the soldier and patriot," T. F. Meagher, to make an address; and "the committee were also negotiating for, and hoped to be able to conclude the necessary arrangements to give a grand billiard

tournament by those celebrated Irish knights of the cue, Messrs. Phelan, Cavanagh, Tieman, and Foley;" while mere sight-seers might have the gratification of visiting Colonel White's museum, where "they will see two millions of curiosities, including the invisible lady."

All this sounds very comical, but there is a tragic side of it, not, indeed, for England, but for the warm-hearted people among the untaught masses of Ireland, who are thus misled. The Fenian chiefs are themselves no better taught than the majority of sharpers. They write about "blessings and boquets," and "auxilliary entertainments," and everywhere, in distorted ill-spelt language, scatter their wicked perversions of the truth. What Irishman of moderate intelligence does not know how heartily England strove to allay the distresses of the Irish famine of 1847-8, yet thus a "smart" Fenian ventures to play on the credulity of his poor victims:

"England, with the cold, malignant ingenuity of an incarnate fiend, has laid down the sword for the *famine*, and the fire for the *pestilence*, and with these agents, these purely English agents, has now reduced our destruction to the certainty of a mathematical problem. Four or five years of such successful famine as 1847-8 would have rid England of all her troubles. But the destruction was too horrible. The world stood appalled at a whole nation perishing of want in the midst of plenty, and the plan was modified to suit the advanced civilisation of the age, and at the present rate it will take fourteen or fifteen years to blot the Irish race from its native land. Oh! countrymen, it was not thus in the days when the men of Ireland, with their keen battle-axes and trusty swords, defended the fields they cultivated and manured them with the corpses of the invaders."

Eighty years ago, Sir Jonah Barrington said of his countrymen, that "nine-tenths of the whole population would rather fight than let it alone." And the love of fighting somebody or anybody, still appears stronger in Irishmen in Ireland than it does elsewhere; no matter when or where or what about, they are always ready. One the other day knocked down his comrade without provocation, and on being asked by him, "Pat, what did you strike *me* for?" replied, "Shure, Mick, and ef I struck you myself, I wouldn't let any other man do it." One may observe them at either race, or fair, or pattern, sitting as uncomfortable as possible when all is quiet, turning suddenly at the slightest noise, as if it might be the happy forerunner of a blow, and apparently grudging every minute that slips by, as if they thought it was all lost time when not

> Fighting like devils for conciliation,
> And hating each other for the love of God.

In days gone past we had Ribbonmen and Whiteboys, with their Captains "Starlight," "Moonlight," and other more ominous names, and now we hear of the drilling that goes on after dark in different parts of Ireland, sticks representing muskets, with which Fenian volunteers go through the "manual and platoon exercise," march and counter-march, form line, and from that close column, and then deploy again. We all know that in the month of February, Irishmen were dressed in American uniforms, that they showed themselves so attired in public, and were said to be members of the Fenian Brotherhood, and there are thousands of men, Fenians at heart, who did not appear in uniform. We know, also, that hundreds have been drilling in various parts of the south of Ireland, and when more offensive weapons are convenient, the former drilling with shillelaghs will render them certainly the more dangerous. The Dublin correspondent of the Times wrote on the 23rd February: "I learn that a number of the most intelligent and respectable among the mechanics in this city are enrolled in the 'Brotherhood of St. Patrick,' and they are avowedly training an army to co-operate with the Americans when they come to invade this country." True as it is that no Fenian army, even if it sailed from the American shores, would ever reach this side of the Atlantic, it is not folly to see and lament that these poor men have become tools of designing fanatics.

All that the Irish Fenians require to make them able to do much murder is a stock of ammunition, and two or three thousand muskets. There might then be mischief enough done within any twenty-four hours, for plenty of powder and guns are within reach, and to be had almost for the fetching.

Should the stranger, after seeing the principal sights of Dublin, feel inclined to have a closer look at the harbour defence, he can get on a car at the Monument in Sackville-street, cross over Carlisle Bridge, pass the theatres, and on to Irishtown, through Ring's End, after which he will be driven over a narrow road, on a long spit of land which runs into the sea for about a mile and a half, and where it widens, a little near the extremity, he will find the Pigeon House Fort. When he gets near to the fort he will observe upon his left the remains of H.M.S. Mermaid, brought here from Portsmouth, cut down and converted into a store. Then comes a row of wooden palisading, and next a drawbridge, crossing which, and passing under a gateway, he will find himself in a small court-yard, with cannon pointed, commanding the road he has come; then through another gateway, and he will be in an oblong square, where he will find a flagstaff and a couple of thirty-two pounders. The ball-alley, canteen, and barracks, are on the right, further on is a long building. Beyond that again is a large yard, girt by iron railings, in the centre of which are piled shot of all sizes, and cannon of nearly every calibre lie round about. Then come the officers' quarters, a large commodious building in which no officer lives, and next to this are the magazines, the powder depôt for the whole of Ireland, where there are some tons of gunpowder deposited, also Congreve rockets, shrapnel shells, canister and grape, and ammunition of every sort, blank and ball, for Enfield and Whitworth rifles, and the same for Armstrong guns. The next house

is the barrack-master's, which, like the lawyer's house in a village, is far from being the worst in the place; and then comes another small guard-room, and another gateway leading on to the breakwater. When returning, he will observe a small landing-place to the right, used for the unloading of ammunition, &c., which is conveyed from Woolwich in government vessels. From this landing-place to the entrance there is only a wall loopholed about every forty yards for defence. The most interesting object is the armoury, the long building already mentioned, entrance to which may be gained by application to the head clerk; it is said to be the next in importance to Woolwich, and a regular staff of workmen is employed here. Entering from the front by folding-doors, the stranger finds himself in a small hall facing a staircase about eight feet wide. In and round this hall are numerous articles used in ancient warfare, coats of mail and suits of armour of every kind, from that of the knight to the mousquetaire, while pikes, battle-axes, and blunderbusses adorn the walls, and festoons of bayonets, wreaths of pistols, and stars formed of small-swords and daggers, decorate the sides of the staircase. Up the stairs is a long wide room, at the end of which another room similar in size branches off to the right; here again the walls are covered with "pikes and guns and bows, and good old swords and bucklers too," while in every window-ledge is displayed the model of a cannon or some other destructive engine of war. Down the middle of these rooms, in tier upon tier, are over thirty thousand Enfield and Whitworth rifled muskets, with bayonets to match, besides more than a thousand six-barrelled revolver pistols. In this building are arms for an army, and not one hundred yards from them is the ammunition.

Here is then, quite handy when required, just what the Brothers of St. Patrick want, nicely laid out for them to take away. Not a house is within a mile of the outside of the fort, there is no thoroughfare in that direction, no telegraph wire even in case of fire to intimate the fact to the Dublin authorities. There are only five sentinels posted in and round the fort, or a guard of fifteen men with two corporals and a sergeant. During the summer months there are, in addition to these, about eighty men usually stationed there for musketry instruction; but it is a standing order in the fort for all the ammunition to be collected from the men as soon as they enter it and given into store, and eighty men without ammunition are less formidable than a dozen men with it.

Within a few miles are the Wicklow mountains, where a couple of thousand Fenians could easily assemble, although one-tenth of that number would be sufficient. Then, if a small steamer with two or more good sized boats were chartered from some Irish port, say Dundalk or Belfast, and sailing thence ostensibly bound for Glasgow, were to make for some unfrequented part of the Wicklow coast, and there lie to, until two or three hundred "Brethren" got on board from the shore in the ship's boats; then about midnight, if that vessel were to slip through Dublin Bay, quietly steam past the lighthouse until opposite to the small landing-place where the warlike stores are embarked and disembarked, stop there, lower a boat, send it with half a dozen men and muffled oars to surprise and gag the sentry—not a very difficult matter when his musket is unloaded—what might follow?

TO HIS LOVE:

WHO HAD UNJUSTLY REBUKED HIM.

Gentle as Truth, and zealous even as Love—
Which is the fiercest of all earthly things;
Frank, and yet using caution as a glove
To guard the skin from foulnesses or stings,—
Giving the bare hand surely to the true:
Such would I be, to make me worthy you.

Bitter sometimes, as wholesome tonics are;
Wrathful as Justice in her earnest mood;
Scornful as Honour is, yet not to bar
Appreciation of the lowest good;
Hating the vile, the cruel, the untrue:
How should my manhood else be worthy you?

Say I am subtil, fierce, and bitter-tongued:
Love is all this, and yet Love is beloved.
But say not that I wilfully have wrong'd
Even those whose hate and falsehood I have proved.
Who say this know me not, and never knew
What I would be, but to be worthy you.

FALSE HOPE.

God save me from mine enemy,
I pray we ne'er may meet again.
She has been worse than foe to me:
And yet, if we should meet again
I should believe her to my bane.

She has been worse than foe to me,
With promised love and present pain,
Till love seem'd only injury,
And troth was known to be in vain:
I did believe her, to my bane.

Her clear eyes look'd so lovingly,
She clung with such a hearty strain,
Her lips—so sweet, so sweet to me—
Left upon mine a poison blain:
I did believe her, to my bane.

She has been worse than foe to me:
Yet I should love her o'er again
If we should meet—dear Injury!
Men call her Hope—but she is Pain.
Pray God we may not meet again!

WHO ARE THEY?

I go a great deal about London alone, and, having no one to talk to, I consequently talk to myself; I do not mean audibly or visibly, but to that inner self which we all carry about with us, like a leaden image or a silver one, as the case may be. And I generally talk of the people I see, say in omnibuses or at the theatre, wondering who they are, and what their social condition, and how they live, and what the great whirring wheels of life are doing for them in that big workshop of fate where the patterns of

our several looms are being wrought. And, by long habit in these speculations, it seems to me that I have acquired an extraordinary insight into the lives of those I meet; or it may be merely an active fancy, which, because it is clear, I therefore believe to be true.

Now, there is that young, dark-haired, desolate-looking man, with a quantity of Palais Royal jewellery dangling from his chain, and the unmistakable look of a Frenchman in every inch of his person; I can see into his life and being as distinctly as if I were reading a page of long primer, well leaded. He is a pianoforte tuner—cannot you see that by his hands?—and he is the only son of a highly respectable cabinet-maker in a small provincial town in France. But cabinet-makers in small provincial towns are seldom men of means, even if highly respectable; and when they have ambitious sons, with talents refusing to develop themselves in the direction of ordinary mechanical labour, it is a difficulty to know what to do with them, that the stars and the pot-au-feu may be served at the same time. And so when young Auguste, who wanted only opportunity and encouragement to become a second Verdi at the least, finally decided on music as his vocation and England as his sphere (incited to this last decision by an insane belief that London was a sunless, fog-haunted Tom Tiddler's ground, where gold grew in the streets), Monsieur son Père and Madame sa Mère could only kiss him weepingly, invoking all the saints in his behalf, and letting him depart as a lamb out of the sheepfold, with the wolves ranging in procession at the gate. "Cette maudite Angleterre!" they said, "and ces malheureuses jeunes miss!" They made no doubt but that their precious lamb would be devoured by the wolves in less than a month, and that he would return to his native place tacked for life to a jeune Miss Britannique, with teeth like a horse, a stride like a grenadier, hair like tow, and masculinity enough for half a dozen enfants perdus. This is the current idea of English women in France, and this is what Auguste's father and mother pictured to themselves when they drew out the programme of their son's career in England.

Auguste is thinking now of the past; of that long, wide, paved street where "Laplace, Menusier," shines like an oasis of pleasant memories in the dull desert of his daily life; he is thinking of la Mère Rougetête and her café, where he and the young men of the town used to assemble every evening at eight o'clock precisely, to play at dominoes and tric-trac, drinking eau sucré or café noir, as they chose; some—but these were terrible fellows—adding a little absinthe or rhum as flavouring. He is thinking of fat old Babette, the femme de ménage, who is as much part of his home and its reminiscences as Maman herself, or Jacques the journeyman; he sees the lime-trees, with the bees humming about their flowers, and pretty little Fanchon, the daughter of "Madame Robert, Confiseur," gathering pâquerettes and bluets in the hedgeless meadows; he sees the old diligence coming jingling in from Abbeville, and the cocked-hats of the garde champêtre scouring the country in search of evil-doers; he sees the good old curé, full of flesh and kindliness, nodding here and there to his parishioners, every one of whom is like his own child; he sees mon père bald, vivacious, and obese, and ma mère in her pink ribbons, and black silk dress fitting like a skin; and then Auguste's heart gets very full, and his handkerchief is in sorrowful request, and he feels himself a lonely exile in this perfide Albion, where no gold grows in the street though the sun never shines, and where his dreams of fame and glory and money consequent, have consolidated themselves into the meagre fact of pianoforte tuning at two shillings—a reduction made to schools and professionals.

Poor Auguste! It is a little tragedy, though—is it not?—which he is enacting in his small way. He is paying for his English experience rather dearly; and yet it will be better for him in the end than if he had remained at that dear little dull provincial town all his life—a génie inconnu, giving itself the airs of an ugly duck, whose brilliant swanhood was ignored by the inferior fowls, envious of his supremacy. This was the story I told myself, looking at that dark-haired young Frenchman with the heavy eyelids and the melancholy face and fine-pointed finger-tops, very dirty, who sat by the door and looked out into the muddy street, and seemed not far from charcoal or prussic acid. And yet, perhaps, he was only tormented about his lodgings, and a landlady ignorant of the sublime laws of credit; perhaps his father, a well-to-do burly old curmudgeon, down in Leicester-square, making his fortune by all sorts of unhallowed ways, had boxed his ears this morning for some breach of filial respect—and these young Frenchmen will cry for a mere nothing sometimes; or perhaps he has a headache, and is loathing the idea of Cremorne.

Next to him come two bright, fair-haired English lads, with shillings apiece in their pockets, off to the Polytechnic and that jolly old ghost, for a rare lot of fun. Such a contrast as they present to melancholy, cream-coloured Auguste! Catch them crying about anything short of mamma's or the governor's death! They are evidently the sons of a gentleman, for all that they chaff the conductor and play monkey tricks with their money, and comport themselves generally like young leopard cubs turned into the likeness of two-footed Christians for the time being. Had they been in the country they would have been hunting rats with old Dick Lawson the ratcatcher, or snaring rabbits in the field below the spring-head, or digging for moles in the croft, or shooting young pheasants in the wood, or coaxing the filly in the paddock, when not "shooing" and frightening her into temporary insanity, or doing a thousand and one of those uncatalogued initiations into manhood which make boys so detestable, and yet which are somehow right steps toward a manly futurity. As it is, they expend their superfluous energy in London by chaffing

omnibus conductors, and "larking all over the place," as Jim says, trying to look stern (Jim is the conductor); but failing in the attempt. I can see all their lives, too, and their fathers' before them; the old man down in Sussex tying every shilling he possessed at the tails of his dogs and horses, and losing them all—the sons, inheriting their father's love of field sports and fresh country life; inheriting, too, his depth of chest and breadth of shoulder and thorough Saxon development and nature, but obliged, for the sake of their professions and the bread that must be baked, to come to smoky London—and now these two lads, with the old lay cropping out in their saucy faces and golden-edged curls and great broad frames, and all the other signs and symbols of the English gentleman with the fling of Esau across his raiment. One could scarcely conceive of anything healthier or more masculine than this type of the country-bred Briton: a type which it takes many generations of London smoke and slang to wear out.

Very different in texture altogether is the physical humanity of the small-handed woman opposite, dressed in a shabby gown, with a soiled flaunting bonnet, and a torn shawl of many colours, who evidently thinks that nerves and idleness are three parts of the essence of gentlehood, and that she can make herself "a lady" by ceasing to be a woman and becoming a doll. Her husband is a rough-mannered, rough-handed mechanic, making perhaps forty shillings a week or so, more or less; and he, too, shares in the delusion that work is "low" for a woman, and that idleness is a refinement, and a thing to be cultivated by the ambitious. It is his pride to boast that "*his* wife is kept like a lady, with a servant of her own; and needn't do a hand's turn if she don't like." So he puts her in a "nice little home" at Camberwell, with a best parlour and a black horse-hair sofa, quite comfortable; and there she lords it in state over a miserable little elf, a parish apprentice, small enough to be carried like a lapdog in the pocket. But the elf does all the dirty work, and the rough and the hard work too, that my lady the mechanic's wife may not soil her hands, or make them "hard like a common woman's." She is one of a kind I see a great deal of, and that I can never sufficiently deplore; for they seem to me to be cutting at the root of all that is most wholesome in the English artisan class, its simple strong hold on realities; and that while the men of that class are so wonderfully improving, the women are just as much deteriorating by their terrible aping of fine-ladyism and finery.

Look at the envious glances which our lady of Camberwell is casting at those two pretty young creatures in bright blue silks, so carefully tucked up over their knees, evidently off to a friendly party somewhere. You can see that they are ladies, even if papa's income makes it necessary for them to peril their best dresses in an omnibus, rather than spend a few shillings in a cab. That they are happy and innocent, and innocently happy in their present finery, is also as evident; and yet both those girls would do real good hard work if need be; and, indeed, do so; helping their one servant, Jane, as much from kindness and that she should not be overworked, as from mamma's desire, and their own, to "make things look nice." They are very charming girls; I should say the daughters of an artist, from a certain debonnair something—a certain almost imperceptible loosening of stays and slackening of ropes that belongs to this class—and from the excellent choice of colours in their dress. I like to think of the sweetness of home, and the happy family life which they help to make in their fresh little house at Bayswater; I like to see them all crowding round dear papa's picture, each with more loving praises on her lips than the last; I like to see mamma, buxom, unwearied, managing mamma, with her faith that never fails and her hope that never cools, believing always in the fortune surely now within their grasp, and the sudden outblaze of fame that is to eclipse all living rivals. If the reality is something deader and drier than these brilliant dreams, what matter? the dreams are the sugar-plums helping to digest the "salt junk" of actuality, sweetening not supplanting meals.

As surely as these two gracious maidens are of the artist world, so surely is that lady next them of the literary. A square-headed woman, with a fixed, rather hard, but not unkindly face, wearing spectacles, short petticoats, scant crinoline, if any, carrying an umbrella and a roll of papers—is she not a British Museumite, and one familiar with the printer's devil?—a practical, strong-minded, clear-brained authoress, ready for any work and with energy enough for any vocation, and with half a hundred missions; of which, however, womanly subserviency or submission does not form one. As she sits there, with her strongly-marked features and her watchful eyes that see everything, yet are not of the quick and roving kind, rather wide and steady, I can read her history too, like the rest; perhaps more clearly than she can read mine, though I meet her big grey eyes fixed on me, and know that I am being photographed for future use. One thing I see, which has no business there, and that is, a wedding-ring on her left hand. Her husband, poor man! has a hardish time of it, be sure; for those deep dints in the forehead between the eyes, and the furrow from the nostril to the mouth, and the look of pain and experience and the unrest of a battle always going on and never ended, are not eloquent of rose-leaves and eider-down; and I fear that my literary friend's matrimonial possessor may at times find a strong-minded woman, making her due share of the family income, rather more of a helpmate than a sweetheart. And yet she is not bad, she is only too much the reverse of our lady of Camberwell. When women will leave off exaggerating good qualities they will have achieved a more thorough freedom than even the most emancipated dream of: and that is, freedom from the tyranny of their own weaknesses.

Who is that man facing our poor Auguste, next the door, talking to the conductor? He is one of the nameless mysterious people that are always turning up in London, dirty and shabby, unutterably dissipated, but with a handful of gold and silver, and seemingly on good terms with every one on the road and about the public-house doors. He talks to Jim as if he were his brother, and makes private and confidential inquiries about 'Arry, and 'Arry's wife and children (he calls her the missis, and them the kids); and he knows all about the last fight, and enters into deep arcana of letters that should have been written, and of foul play that has been the ruin of this and that; and I confess that he puzzles me, and unless he is a fighting-man, or the keeper of a house of call for fighting-men, or a translated driver who has made his fortune, or else the conductor who wore a diamond ring worth seventy pounds, and had a lady for a wife with a diamond ring worth forty more, I cannot tell who he is; I think, though, he keeps a house of call somewhere in the Haymarket, and that he rears bull pups for pleasure, and has a "fancy" barman for sport.

The grave, severe, elderly gentleman, evidently a wealthy merchant of impeccable respectability, sitting next him, looks very much as if he were eating a ghostly lemon, which sets his mouth awry. It is a condescension on the part of our wealthy merchant to ride in an omnibus at all, but when he gets bracketed with a fellow-traveller of the present calibre, his gorge rises almost beyond his power to keep down; and his wife and daughter wonder what has made papa so cross to-day when he goes home to dinner, and visions of an impending bankruptcy sweep before mamma, naturally a little timid and very lachrymose. If those fluttered inmates of Westbourne-terrace knew that dear papa had been submitted to such contamination, how they would have sympathised with him! As it is, for want of knowing, Mary Matilda sulked, and Emma Jane flouted, and poor dear mamma cried, and John was in the dust with sackcloth round his calves and ashes on his powder, because papa was in such an awful humour, there was no bearing with him. Was it really only the accidental presence of a fighting-man in an omnibus that made all this to-do?—or had yesterday's unlucky speculation and to-day's opening of the purse-strings some hand in the upset? I think old Mr. Double-cash, the banker, could have dissected some part of the load, though it might have been the last straw that broke the camel's back, which had not bent under the weight of iron.

Little care the couple next to the respectable British merchant for anything in the world save themselves. Both young, both silly, awfully in love, and newly married, if life is not fairyland to them now, I wonder when it will be, and to whom! They have not a care; not the faintest shadow of future anxiety lies across their footway; there is no sickness in the world, no debt, no poverty, no unkindness, no disappointment, nothing but a huge wedding-cake, all sugar and sweet almonds, decked with wedding favours snow white, the edges unsoiled and the ends unjagged. They were married just this day week; and I can see the pretty, simple, country wedding down among the mountains, where, I am bound to say, if I would speak the truth, a wedding of almost any kind is held as a maiden triumph worthy any amount of pæans; for young men of marriageable means are frightfully scarce, and young ladies of marriageable age just as much too rife in these remoter parts of England. So that, when Cecilia Selina was duly engaged and finally wedded to Harry Augustus, it was something to be rejoiced at even beyond the rejoicing of love. It was a prize drawn in the lottery where so many must turn up blanks. They have known each other all their lives, these young people, but it was only quite of late that they thought of being in love at all; or at least that he thought of it; perhaps Cecilia Selina and her sisters might have told a different story. To him, however, it flashed out at once, and quite unexpectedly, when he saw the attention which Mr. Wiseman, the Cambridge tutor down for the season, paid Miss Cecilia at the vicar's evening-party—she in no wise resenting or discountenancing. Then Mr. Harry Augustus hid the truth from himself no longer; he confessed his love; he bought the blue turquoise forget-me-not ring, de rigueur in his estimation; he spoke to mamma, and he asked papa; and, finally, in three months' time from the day he "offered," was made the happy husband of Cecilia Selina—coming up to London for their honeymoon, as gay as larks and as bright as peacocks. They have seen everything, from the Tower to the Crystal Palace; doing all the theatres, and all the exhibitions, and all the sights, with unflagging spirits and untiring muscles. They write long letters every day to their sisters, and shed a reflexion of their own sunshine on the quiet home by the lake-side; and, then, they will go back the day month of their marriage, neither sooner nor later, and the vicar will give them a dinner, at which their healths will be drank, Harry Augustus being bound to make a speech in reply; which he does, very fairly on the whole, breaking down into a headless sentence, with nothing to stand on, only at the last.

I wonder who is that fine-looking man, who has just come in, taking up more than the room vacated by the two fair English boys. He is a big, many-fleshed person, a man seeming to belong to a larger generation than the present; standing six foot full, in his shoes, and broad in the proportion of his height and sixty years. His hair, which is long and thick and wavy, is snow white, as is his beard; but his eyes are dark and lustrous, and his eyebrows black as jet. He is wonderfully handsome, and of the leonine type of manhood; a dangerous man in his wrath I should say, but to be led by a child in the silken cords of gentleness and love. He may be anything, civil or military: no, he cannot be military! He has never gone through the goose-step, or been drilled in a barrack-yard

in his life. Those broad, wide flings of his—his coat of monstrous looseness, and his trousers of unheard-of width, his habitual lounge and strong individuality not in the faintest degree shaded off into command, are all against the possibility of the military theory. He looks more like an engineer—like a man who has been abroad in rich, warm, generous climates, and who has fought for his own hand ever since he was a boy—conquering all manner of evil circumstance, and coming now to the end of the strife triumphant and a hero to the last. I like to see these leonine magnificent men. They are like bits of old Greek or Roman life, great, beautiful, and masculine, translated into our smaller world of nerves and nervous development; and carry with them an atmosphere of health and strength, even into omnibuses when they enter. I could weave a whole novel out of that big man's life; but before I have finished the first chapter, he lunges at the conductor with his thick carved stick, heaves himself weightily out of the machine, and I see him striding back at a speed *I* could not match, having forgotten to buy his wife a lobster at Lynn's. And Lynn's is the only place in London—so he says, but I do not—where they are to be had worth the eating. And when there falls helplessly into his place an old, bent, withered, dusty, little woman, with a red bundle smelling of cheese and stale pie-crust—a dusty little woman like a withered green apple all of whose juices are dried up, and whose few last years will be spent in the charitable Union—I too have come to the end of my day's travel, and must leave my omnibus friends of an hour with the remainder of their histories unfinished.

MORE TRIFLES FROM CEYLON.

In this moist showery isle of verdure, if it happen not to rain for six weeks, people begin to write and declaim about the fearful drought. One man from the Ambegamoa district describes the terrible state of things there; it has actually not rained for three whole weeks! Now, in the north of Ceylon, the climate of which resembles in some degree that of India, and on the Coromandel coast, rain falls at one season of the year, that is, between October and January, and for the rest of the year very little indeed falls—certainly when it does come down, it makes up for lost time.

Just at present we have a season of drought, and the wild animals consequently draw towards the rivers; and cheetahs, or panthers rather—for, according to Sir E. Tennent, the cheetah is unknown in Ceylon—have approached the outskirts of Colombo, the capital of the island. A very large one was observed swimming across the Kalany Ganga a few days ago, and was shot.

Later still, while a strongly built Singhalese man was bathing in the same river, a panther sprang into the water and seized him by the right arm; the man, who was unarmed, grasped his assailant by the throat; and a companion ran up with a knife, and dealt the panther such a blow on the head that he quitted his hold of the man's arm, but again seized him by the thigh. The man who had the knife, cut the panther across the throat and rescued his companion: an act of daring for which he ought to receive a medal. The wounded man was conveyed to the hospital, where he lies dangerously ill.

A friend of mine was lately riding in company with three others, in single file along the narrow strip of land which connects the peninsula of Jaffna with the rest of the island, when suddenly his horse sprang to one side in a manner so unexpected as nearly to unseat him. It appeared that an alligator which had been lying by the side of the lagoon, had made a spring at the horse's legs as he passed. One of the gentlemen who was riding behind my friend, and who had seen the whole proceeding, was so strongly impressed with the idea that the horse had been touched by the alligator, that he was not satisfied until he had dismounted and examined the horse's legs. This is unquestionably one of the coolest pieces of impertinence I have ever heard of on the part of a tank alligator; and having heard of it I shall certainly be more cautious about going into tanks where alligators are, up to my waist, for half an hour at a time. I remember once watching the proceedings of alligators in a tank in this neighbourhood. I espied on the opposite side of a tank two black curlew, birds of most delicate flavour, but very shy. My gun carrier was a good way in the rear, and as the curlew were moving quietly along, I rode into the tank to watch them. There were several alligators about me, and the way they went to work was this: A fellow would rise to the surface and look at my pony and me to see where we were. Then he would sink and come up again a little nearer and go down again, and come up and have another look to see where we were. At last my gun was brought and I had my shot at the curlew, and saw no more of the alligators, who always take alarm at the sound of a gun.

I omitted to mention that on his return a day or two after, my friend kept a look-out for his enemy, and discovered him once more on the bank—he gave him a two-ounce rifle-ball, which made a long white scar along his back; however, a wound like that does not usually prove fatal at once, and the alligator succeeded in getting away.

The magistrate at Mullativoe one morning found that an alligator had sought the hospitable shelter of his court-house during the night, and a gentleman at Batticaton found another in his stable.

An old sportsman in Jaffna, who had an endless stock of tales, used to tell how he had once shot several alligators with grains of rice instead of ball! After he had tested the credulity of his hearers to a moderate degree, he would add that the alligators were about nine inches long. They were young ones which he killed as specimens.

However loathsome-looking an animal an old alligator may be, the young alligators are not so very disgusting. In fact, the bright yellow bars which alternate with the black ones, are rather pretty than otherwise. I had one in a vivarium, and the vicious little beast used to nip my fingers when I tried to feed it. It got out one night, and I don't know what became of it.

A moorman caught a young alligator in his fishing kraal in the Matura River, and I went to see it. It was alive, and to all appearances there was no reason why, if left alone, it should not grow up to alligator's estate—its length was about three and a half feet. Thinking that this would be a good opportunity for testing the correctness of what I had heard in the north of the island about the remarkable effect of lime upon the alligator, I asked a man to bring me some, on which he procured from a neighbouring house a lump of the chunamb, or lime prepared from shells, which the natives are in the habit of chewing along with the nut of the areca-palm, and the leaves of the betel-creeper. The lime had previously been moistened with water. Having opened the jaws of our unfortunate victim: an operation to which it submitted with exemplary resignation (when it found it could not prevent it), we inserted, as far back as the opening into the throat, a lump of chunamb about as large as a pigeon's egg, after which we put the animal into the water. Immediately it turned over on its side and then on its back, and appeared paralysed; soon its eyes closed, and I thought it was dead. After about five minutes it revived a little. I could not remain longer to watch it, but in the evening I rode to where it had been experimented on, when I found that it was dead, and learnt that it had died within two hours of my leaving. On examining its mouth, I found that the lime had not been swallowed, but was still in the throat, just where it had been placed. I do not remember to have read in any work on animals, of this antipathy of the alligator to lime; and it still remains to be explained how it is that a substance of that nature, specially prepared for the use of man, and by him daily chewed, should have so powerful and instantaneous an effect upon an animal otherwise so tenacious of life, when merely placed in the mouth, without being swallowed. The experiment may appear to have been a cruel one, and yet, perhaps, it was the speediest and easiest mode of killing the alligator. I may now venture to state that the Tamuls have an idea that if a bullet be filled with lime before firing at an alligator, it will, wherever it penetrates, cause a wound that will prove mortal. I have, since making the experiment related above, been told that it is not uncommon for the Singhalese to fill the stomach of a bullock with lime, and to place it near an alligator's haunts; knowing that if he swallow the lime, death will ensue.

Mullativoe (mentioned just now) is an isolated station, where the magistrate is the only European, and administers justice in a patriarchal way. Close to the court is a tank full of alligators, and as the magistrate sat on his bench he could see them crawl out and bask in the sunshine. So he used to take his rifle with him to court, and keep it ready loaded beside him. In the middle of the examination of a witness, the clerk of the court would turn round and say, "Sir! sir! there's an alligator." Down would go the pen, up would go the rifle—Bang! and out would rush the clerk and interpreter to see what damage had been done. After a few minutes they would come in again to report, and then business would proceed as before.

A week or two ago, a Tamul man and woman were travelling together at night, when they met an elephant in the road. They tried to avoid it, but in vain. The animal charged them both, killed the woman, and very severely injured the man. Most probably it was a rogue.

Buffaloes are very formidable customers. They charge with great fury, and it is not easy to get a good shot when they are coming at one with their hard heads, from which a ball is apt to glance. The best way to shoot a buffalo when there are two sportsmen, is for the two to keep a hundred yards apart. One should then fire. If the buffalo does not drop, he will probably charge the man who fired, and in so doing will give the other sportsman the chance of a flank shot.

The natives catch the wild buffaloes, and tame them. At certain seasons they are employed in ploughing the paddy-fields; at other times they are allowed to roam about, when they often regather with the wild herds. A half-tamed buffalo, though he yields a sullen obedience to his master, will often prove a dangerous customer to a stranger: in fact, almost more so than a wild one. I was travelling one day with a lady, on the sea road between Trincomalie and Jaffna. I was riding a small pony, when, in crossing a plain, a buffalo charged me. I was unarmed, and as he came at me with a will, I had no alternative but to dash on as fast as I could, my assailant charging from one side; but with a tired pony escape was not easy, and I was getting the worst of it, when, to my great satisfaction and amusement, my friend went head over heels in a mud-hole which lay between us. This cooled his ardour, and he gave up the pursuit.

There is a place called Kokalai, in the northern province, where wild buffaloes were almost always to be seen. One of them was exceedingly fierce, and killed several persons. The magistrate went to the spot, and in the capacity of coroner held an inquest. He had just concluded, when the buffalo emerged from the neighbouring forest, and charged down upon his party. Fortunately he had with him a single-barrelled rifle. He dropped on one knee, waited till the buffalo was close on him, and fired. The ball took effect in the buffalo's forehead, and ran far into his body, and the brute dropped dead at the gentleman's feet.

Bears often attack people, and are seemingly the aggressors; but in all probability it is rather

the fear of being attacked themselves that induces them to injure man. I have a friend who had a most terrific tussle with a bear which he had wounded with shot. The bear closed with him, and he fought the bear with his knife, giving and receiving terrible wounds. At length my friend got away, and crawled for some distance till he obtained assistance. But he will bear to his grave, the marks of his enemy's teeth and claws. The following story was recently told me by the gentleman who met with the adventure: He had a pony which was very much attached to him, and very gentle with him, but which would not allow any one else to mount him. He was given to flying at and biting strangers, a quality which turned to the advantage of his owner. One morning my friend was on the march through the jungle, his coolies and servants following with his baggage, guns, &c., and he walking with his pony's bridle over his arm. It would appear that a bear was just then regaling himself in the pathway, by an ant-hill which concealed his interesting figure from the traveller's view until close upon him. Suddenly the gentleman felt himself thrown down, with the bear on his back pawing and scratching him. Knowing that there were four loaded guns in the hands of his attendants, he called out to them to fire, and at the same time struck backward at the bear with a stick which lay within his reach. No one fired, however, and he did not know what to do, when suddenly he heard a scrimmage; next moment the weight was removed from his shoulders, and on looking up he saw the bear in full flight and the pony after him with his ears set back. He got up and shook himself, and saw his guns lying on the ground; his attendants had all disappeared. He was about to retrace his footsteps, when he heard several voices saying "Here we are!" and on looking up, he saw his people perched high in the trees. They told him that the pony had flown at the bear with such fury, that he had taken to his heels in the manner described. Moral. There is some good in a biting and kicking pony.

There is a certain gentleman in Ceylon who is a great sportsman. I do not know him myself, and therefore do not make more particular allusion to him; but he had the following adventure, and it was related to me by a mutual friend, who authorised me to repeat it. This gentleman was one day crossing some water on foot, to get a shot at an elephant; his gun was in the hands of a man who was going round the shore. As he walked along, something lay in his way which he imagined to be a log of wood, so he stepped over it. No sooner had he placed one leg over it than the log appeared suddenly to become imbued with life, and he found himself across the back of an alligator:—probably more alarmed even than himself at being thus mounted. The alligator immediately rushed off. The rider, as soon as he recovered his presence of mind, took a header into the water, and escaped.

I alluded in a former paper to an alligator which had killed two persons not far from where I write, and who was constantly on the watch for bathers. I am happy to say he has been shot. The particulars of the manner in which he killed the two men have been communicated to me. A gentleman in the public service was bathing within an enclosure. A Singhalese gentleman of rank was also bathing without the enclosure; a native attendant filled a vessel with water and handed it to him; suddenly the man who had brought the water was gone; and the two bathers saw him with half his body in the water, at some distance, throwing up his arms and apparently articulating something. All at once he sunk. They imagined at first that he had been carried off by the current, but subsequently the body was found in a mutilated state. A few days afterwards, seven pilgrims were standing knee-deep in the same river; the alligator passed six of them, seized the last, and dragged him away from among his companions.

At Batticaloa a girl was bathing on her bridal morning, when an alligator seized and carried her off. A friend of mine succeeded in shooting the brute, and found within him parts of the girl, and her bangles, or arm-rings.

Sharks are occasionally caught with the remains of human beings within them. Not long since, one was exposed for sale in the bazaar at Colombo, in which was found a white hand; a poor soldier had been buried at sea the previous day, and it is believed it had belonged to him. I remember rather a pretty little discussion arising between two Singhalese men, the one the buyer, the other the seller, of a shark. The price paid for it was twenty rix dollars, or one pound ten. When the purchaser was cutting it up for sale, he found inside the stomach, the leg of a man. Thereupon people declined purchasing any pieces, and the shark remained on the man's hands. So he demanded that the seller should refund the one pound ten. "No, no," said he; "had you found in the fish a bag full of money, you would have claimed it as yours and given me none." The bystanders gave a verdict against the purchaser, and he had to make the best of his bargain.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XVIII. TIDINGS FROM BENGAL.

I am not about to chronicle how time now rolled over the characters of our story. As for the life of those at the villa, nothing could be less eventful. All existences that have any claim to be called happy are of this type, and if there be nothing brilliant or triumphant in their joys, neither is there much poignancy in their sorrows.

Loyd wrote almost by every mail, and with a tameness that shadowed forth the uniform tenor of his own life. It was pretty nigh the same story, garnished by the same reflections. He had been named a district judge "up country," and passed his days deciding the disputed claims of indigo planters against the ryots, and the ryots against the planters. Craft,

subtlety, and a dash of perjury, ran through all these suits, and rendered them rather puzzles for a quick intelligence to resolve, than questions of right or legality. He told, too, how dreary and uncompanionable his life was; how unsolaced by friendship, or even companionship; that the climate was enervating, the scenery monotonous, and the thermometer at a hundred and twenty or a hundred and thirty degrees.

Yet Loyd could speak with some encouragement about his prospects. He was receiving eight hundred rupees a month, and hoped to be promoted to some place, ending in Ghar or Bad, with an advance of two hundred more. He darkly hinted that the mutinous spirit of certain regiments was said to be extending, but he wrote this with all the reserve of an official, and the fear that Aunt Grainger might misquote him. Of course there were other features in these letters—those hopes and fears, and prayers and wishes, which lovers like to write, almost as well as read, poetising to themselves their own existence, and throwing a rose-tint of romance over lives as lead-coloured as may be. Of these I am not going to say anything. It is a theme both too delicate and too dull to touch on. I respect and I dread it.

I have less reserve with the correspondence of another character of our tale, though certainly, when written, it was not meant for publicity. The letter of which I am about to make an extract, and it can be but an extract, was written about ten months after the departure of Calvert for India, and, like his former ones, addressed to his friend Drayton:

"At the hazard of repeating myself, if by chance my former letters have reached you, I state that I am in the service and pay of the Meer Morad, of Ghurtpore, of whose doings the Times correspondent will have told you something. I have eight squadrons of cavalry and a half battery of field-pieces—brass ten pounders—with an English crown on their breech. We are well armed, admirably mounted, and perfect devils to fight. You saw what we did with the detachment of the —th, and their sick convoy, coming out of Allehbad. The only fellow that escaped was the doctor, and I saved his life to attach him to my own staff. He is an Irish fellow, named Tobin, and comes from Tralee—if there be such a place—and begs his friends there not to say masses for him, for he is alive, and drunk every evening. Do this, if not a bore.

"By good luck the Meer, my chief, quarrelled with the king's party in Delhi, and we came away in time to save being caught by Wilson, who would have recognised me at once. By the way, Baxter of the 30th was stupid enough to say, 'Eh, Calvert, what the devil are you doing amongst these niggers?' He was a prisoner at the time, and, of course, I had to order him to be shot for his imprudence. How he knew me I cannot guess; my beard is down to my breast, and I am turbaned and shawled in most approved fashion. We are now simply marauding, cutting off supplies, falling on weak detachments, and doing a small retail business in murder wherever we chance upon a station of civil servants. I narrowly escaped being caught by a troop of the 9th Lancers, every man of whom knows me. I went over, with six trusty fellows, to Astraghan, where I learned that a certain Loyd was stationed as government receiver. We got there by night, burned his bungalow, shot him, and then discovered he was not our man, but another Loyd. Bradshaw came up with his troop. He gave us an eight miles chase cross country, and, knowing how the Ninth ride, I took them over some sharp nullahs, and the croppers they got you'll scarcely see mentioned in the government despatches. I fired three barrels of my Yankee six-shooter at Brad, and I heard the old beggar offer a thousand rupees for my head. When he found he could not overtake us, and sounded a halt, I screamed out, 'Threes about, Bradshaw.' I'd give fifty pounds to hear him tell the story at mess: 'Yes, sir, begad, sir, in as good English, sir, as yours or mine, sir: a fellow who had served the Queen, I'll swear.'

"For the moment, it is a mere mutiny, but it will soon be a rebellion, and I don't conceal from myself the danger of what I am doing, as you, in all likelihood, will suspect. Not dangers from the Queen's fellows—for they shall never take me alive—but the dangers I run from my present associates, and who, of course, only half trust me. . . . . Do you remember old Commissary-General Yates—J.C.V.R. Yates, the old ass used to write himself? Well, amongst the other events of the time, was the sack and 'loot' of his house at Cawnpore, and the capture of his pretty wife, whom they brought in here a prisoner. I expected to find the poor young creature terrified almost out of her reason. Not a bit of it! She was very angry with the fellows who robbed her, and rated them roundly in choice Hindostanee, telling one of the chiefs that his grandfather was a scorched pig. Like a woman, and a clever woman, too, though she recognised me—I can almost swear that she did—she never showed it, and we talked away all the evening, and smoked our hookahs together in Oriental guise. I gave her a pass next morning to Calcutta, and saw her safe to the great trunk road, giving her bearers as far as Behdarah. She expressed herself as very grateful for my attentions, and hoped at some future time—this with a malicious twinkle of her grey eyes—to show the 'Bahadoor' that she had not forgotten them. So you see there are lights as well as shadows in the life of a rebel."

I omit a portion here, and come to the conclusion, which was evidently added in haste.

"'Up, and away!' is the order. We are off to Bithoor. The Nana there—a staunch friend, as it was thought, of British rule—has declared for independence, and as there is plenty of go in him, look out for something 'sensational.' You wouldn't believe how, amidst all these stirring scenes, I long for news—from what people call home—of Rocksley, and Uncle G., and the dear Soph; but more from that villa beside the Italian lake. I'd give a canvas

bag that I carry at my girdle with a goodly stock of pearls, sapphires, and rubies, for one evening's diary of that cottage!

"If all go on as well and prosperously as I hope for, I have not the least objection, but rather a wish, that you would tell the world where I am, and what I am doing. Linked with failure, I'd rather keep dark; but as a sharer in a great success, I burn to make it known through the length and breadth of the land that I am alive and well, and ready to acquit a number of personal obligations, if not to the very fellows who injured me, to their friends, relatives, and cousins, to the third generation. Tell them, Algy, 'A chiel's amang ye, cutting throats,' and add, if you like, that he writes himself your attached friend,

"HARRY CALVERT."

This letter, delivered in some mysterious manner to the bankers at Calcutta, was duly forwarded, and in time reached the hands of Alfred Drayton, who confided its contents to a few "friends" of Calvert's—men who felt neither astonished nor shocked at the intelligence—shifty fellows, with costly tastes, who would live on society somehow, reputably, if they could—dishonourably, if they must; and who all agreed that "Old Calvert," as they called him—he was younger than most of them—had struck out a very clever line, and a far more remunerative one than "rooking young Griffins at billiards"—such being, in their estimation, the one other alternative which fate had to offer him. This was all the publicity, however, Drayton gave to his friend's achievements. Somehow or other, paragraphs did appear, not naming Calvert, but intimating that an officer, who had formerly served her Majesty, had been seen in the ranks of the insurgents of Upper Bengal. Yet Calvert was not suspected, and he dropped out of people's minds as thoroughly as if he had dropped out of life.

To this oblivion, for a while, we must leave him; for even if we had in our hands, which we have not, any records of his campaigning life, we might scruple to occupy our readers with details which have no direct bearing upon our story. That Loyd never heard of him is clear enough. The name of Calvert never occurred in any letter from his hand. It was one no more to be spoken of by Florence or himself. One letter from him, however, mentioned an incident which, to a suspicious mind, might have opened a strange vein of speculation, though it is right to add that neither the writer nor the reader ever hit upon a clue to the mystery indicated. It was during his second year of absence that he was sent to Mulnath, from which he writes:

"The mutiny has not touched this spot; but we hear every day the low rumbling of the distant storm, and we are told that our servants, and the native battalion that are our garrison, are only waiting for the signal to rise. I doubt this greatly. I have nothing to excite my distrust of the people, but much to recommend them to my favour. It is only two days back that I received secret intelligence of an intended attack upon my bungalow by a party of Bithoor cavalry, whose doings have struck terror far and near. Two companies of the —th, that I sent for, arrived this morning, and I now feel very easy about the reception the enemy will meet. The strangest part of all is, however, to come. Captain Rolt, who commands the detachment, said in a laughing, jocular way, 'I declare, judge, if I were you, I would change my name, at least till this row was over.' I asked him 'Why?' in some surprise; and he replied, 'There's rather a run against judges of your name lately. They shot one at Astraghan last November. Six weeks back, they came down near Agra, where Craven Loyd had just arrived, district judge and assessor; they burnt his bungalow, and massacred himself and his household; and now, it seems, they are after *you*. I take it that some one of your name has been rather sharp on these fellows, and that this is the pursuit of a long meditated vengeance. At all events, I'd call myself Smith or Brown till this prejudice blows over.'"

The letter soon turned to a pleasanter theme—his application for a leave had been favourably entertained. By October—it was then July—he might hope to take his passage for England. Not that he was, he said, at all sick of India. He had now adapted himself to its ways and habits, his health was good, and the solitude—the one sole cause of complaint—he trusted would, ere long, give way to the happiest and most blissful of all companionship. "Indeed, I must try to make you all emigrate with me. Aunt Grainger can have her flowers and her vegetables here in all seasons, one of my retainers is an excellent gardener, and Milly's passion for riding can be indulged upon the prettiest Arab horses I ever saw."

Though the dangers which this letter spoke of as impending were enough to make Florence anxious and eager for the next mail from India, his letter never again alluded to them. He wrote full of the delight of having got his leave, and overjoyed at all the happiness that he pictured as before him.

So in the same strain and spirit was the next, and then came September, and he wrote: "This day month, dearest—this day month, I am to sail. Already, when these lines are before you, the interval, which to me now seems an age, will have gone over, and you can think of me as hastening towards you."

"Oh, aunt dearest, listen to this. Is not this happy news?" cried Florence, as she pressed the loved letter to her lips. "Joseph says that on the 18th—to-day is—what day is to-day? But you are not minding me, aunt. What can there be in that letter of yours so interesting as this?"

This remonstrance was not very unreasonable, seeing that Miss Grainger was standing with her eyes fixed steadfastly at a letter, whose few lines could not have taken a moment to read, and which must have had some other claim thus to arrest her attention.

"This is wonderful!" cried she, at last.

"What is wonderful, aunt? Do pray gratify our curiosity!"

But the old lady hurried away without a word, and the door of her room, as it sharply banged, showed that she desired to be alone.

CHAPTER XIX. A SHOCK.

No sooner did Miss Grainger find herself safely locked in her room, than she re-opened the letter the post had just brought her. It was exceedingly brief, and seemed hastily written:

"Strictly and imperatively private.

"Trieste, Tuesday morning.

"My dear Miss Grainger,—I have just arrived here from India, with important despatches for the government. The fatigues of a long journey have re-opened an old wound, and laid me up for a day; but as my papers are of such a nature as will require my presence to explain, there is no use in my forwarding them by another; I wait therefore, and write this hurried note, to say that I will make you a flying visit on Saturday next. I say *you*, because I wish to see yourself and alone. Manage this in the best way you can. I hope to arrive by the morning train, and be at the villa by eleven or twelve at latest. Whether you receive me or not, say nothing of this note to your nieces; but I trust and pray you will not refuse half an hour to your attached and faithful friend,

"Harry Calvert."

It was a name to bring up many memories, and Miss Grainger sat gazing at the lines before her in a state of wonderment blended with terror. Once only had she read of him since his departure; it was, when agitated and distressed to know what had become of him, she ventured on a step of, for her, daring boldness, and to whose temerity she would not make her nieces the witnesses. She wrote a letter to Miss Sophia Calvert, begging to have some tidings of her cousin, and some clue to his whereabouts. The answer came by return of post; it ran thus:

"Miss Calvert has to acknowledge the receipt of Miss Grainger's note of the 8th inst.

"Miss Calvert is not aware of any claim Miss Grainger can prefer to address her by letter, still less, of any right to bring under her notice the name of the person she has dared to inquire after. Any further correspondence from Miss Grainger will be sent back unopened."

The reading of this epistle made the old lady keep her bed for three days, her sufferings being all the more aggravated, since they imposed secresy. From that day forth she had never heard Calvert's name; and though for hours long she would think and ponder over him, the mention of him was so strictly interdicted, that the very faintest allusion to him was even avoided.

And now, like one risen from the grave, he was come back again! Come back to renew, Heaven could tell, what sorrows of the past, and refresh the memory of days that had always been dashed with troubles.

It was already Friday. Where and how could a message reach him? She dreaded him, it is true: but why she dreaded him she knew not. It was a sort of vague terror, such as some persons feel at the sound of the sea, or the deep-voiced moaning of the wind through trees. It conveyed a sense of peril through a sense of sadness—no more. She had grown to dislike him from the impertinent rebuke Miss Calvert had administered to her on his account. The mention of Calvert was coupled with a darkened room, leeches, and ice on the head, and, worse than all, a torturing dread that her mind might wander, and the whole secret history of the correspondence leak out in her ramblings.

Were not these reasons enough to make her tremble at the return of the man who had occasioned so much misery? Yet, if she could even find a pretext, could she be sure that she could summon courage to say, "I'll not see you"? There are men to whom a cruelly cold reply is a repulse; but Calvert was not one of these, and this she knew well. Besides, were she to decline to receive him, might it not drive him to come and ask to see the girls, who now, by acceding to his request, need never hear or know of his visit?

After long and mature deliberation, she determined on her line of action. She would pretend to the girls that her letter was from her lawyer, who, accidentally finding himself in her neighbourhood, begged an interview as he passed through Orta on his way to Milan, and for this purpose she could go over in the boat alone, and meet Calvert on his arrival. In this way she could see him without the risk of her nieces' knowledge, and avoid the unpleasantness of not asking him to remain when he had once passed her threshold.

"I can at least show him," she thought, "that our old relations are not to be revived, though I do not altogether break off all acquaintanceship. No man has a finer sense of tact, and he will understand the distinction I intend, and respect it." She also bethought her it smacked somewhat of a vengeance—though she knew not precisely how or why—that she'd take Sophia Calvert's note along with her, and show him how her inquiry for him was treated by his family. She had a copy of her own, a most polite and respectful epistle it was, and in no way calculated to evoke the rebuke it met with. "He'll be perhaps able to explain the mystery," thought she, "and whatever Miss Calvert's misconception, he can eradicate it when he sees her."

"How fussy and important aunt is this morning!" said Florence, as the old lady stepped into the boat. "If the interview were to be with the Lord Chancellor instead of a London solicitor, she could not look more profoundly impressed with its solemnity."

"She'll be dreadful when she comes back," said Emily, laughing; "so full of all the law jargon that she couldn't understand, but will

feel a right to repeat, because she has paid for it."

It was thus they criticised her. Just as many aunts and uncles, and some papas and mammas, too, are occasionally criticised by those younger members of the family who are prone to be very caustic as to the mode certain burdens are borne, the weight of which has never distressed their own shoulders. And this, not from any deficiency of affection, but simply through a habit which, in the levity of our day, has become popular, and taught us to think little of the ties of parentage, and call a father a Governor.

CHAPTER XX. AGAIN AT ORTA.

"THERE is a stranger arrived, Signora, who has been asking for you," said the landlord of the little inn at Orta, as Miss Grainger reached the door. "He has ordered a boat, but, feeling poorly, has lain down on a bed till it is ready. This is his servant," and he pointed, as he spoke, to a dark-visaged and very handsome man, who wore a turban of white and gold, and who made a deep gesture of obeisance as she turned towards him. Ere she had time to question him as to his knowledge of English, a bell rung sharply, and the man hurried away to return very speedily, and, at the same instant, a door opened and Calvert came towards her, and, with an air of deep emotion, took her hand and pressed it to his lips.

"This is too kind, far too kind and considerate of you," said he, as he led her forward to a room.

"When I got your note," she began, in a voice a good deal shaken, for there was much in the aspect of the man before her to move her, "I really did not know what to do. If you desired to see me alone, it would be impossible to do this at the villa, and so I bethought me that the best way was to come over here at once."

"Do you find me much changed?" he asked, in a low, sad voice.

"Yes, I think you are a good deal changed. You are browner, and you look larger, even taller, than you did, and perhaps the beard makes you seem older."

This was all true, but not the whole truth, which, had she spoken it, would have said, that he was far handsomer than before. The features had gained an expression of dignity and elevation from habits of command, and there was a lofty pride in his look which became him well, the more as it was now tempered with a gentle courtesy of manner which showed itself in every word and every gesture towards her. A slight, scarcely perceptible baldness, at the very top of the forehead, served to give height to his head, and add to the thoughtful character of his look. His dress, too, was peculiar, and probably set off to advantage his striking features and handsome figure. He wore a richly embroidered pelisse, fastened by a shawl at the waist, and on his head, rather jauntily set, a scarlet fez stitched in gold, and ornamented with a star of diamonds and emeralds.

"You are right," said he, with a winning but very melancholy smile. "These last two years have aged me greatly. I have gone through a great deal in them. Come," added he, as he seated himself at her side, and took her hand in his, "come, tell me what have you heard of me? Be frank, tell me everything."

"Nothing—absolutely nothing," said she.

"Do you mean that no one mentioned me."

"We saw no one. Our life has been one of complete unbroken solitude."

"Well, but your letters; people surely wrote about me?"

"No," said she, in some awkwardness, for she felt as though there was something offensive in this oblivion, and was eager to lay it to the charge of their isolation. "Remember what I have told you about our mode of life."

"You read the newspapers, though! You might have come upon my name in them!"

"We read none. We ceased to take them. We gave ourselves up to the little cares and occupations of our home, and we really grew to forget that there was a world outside us."

Had she been a shrewd reader of expression, she could not fail to have noticed the intense relief her words gave him. He looked like one who hears the blessed words Not Guilty! after hours of dread anxiety for his fate. "And am I to believe," asked he, in a voice tremulous with joy, "that from the hour I said farewell, to this day, that I have been to you as one dead and buried and forgotten?"

"I don't think we forgot you; but we rigidly observed our pledge to you, and never spoke of you."

"What is there on earth so precious as the trustfulness of true friendship?" burst he in, with a marked enthusiasm. "I have had what the world calls great successes, and I swear to you I'd give them all, and all their rewards twice told, for this proof of affection; and the dear girls, and Florence—how is she?"

"Far better than when you saw her. Indeed, I should say perfectly restored to health. She walks long walks, and takes rides on a mountain pony, and looks like one who had never known illness."

"Not married yet?" said he, with a faint smile.

"No; he is coming back next month, and they will probably be married before Christmas."

"And as much in love as ever—he, I mean?"

"Fully; and she too."

"Pshaw! She never cared for him; she never could care for him. She tried it—did her very utmost. I saw the struggle, and I saw its failure, and I told her so."

"You told her so!"

"Why not? It was well for the poor girl that one human being in all the world should understand and feel for her. And she is determined to marry him?"

"Yes; he is coming back solely with that object."

"How was it that none of his letters spoke of me? Are you quite sure they did not?"

"I am perfectly sure, for she always gave them to me to read."

"Well!" cried he, boldly, as he stood up, and threw his head haughtily back, "the fellow who led Calvert's Horse—that was the name my irregulars were known by—might have won distinction enough to be quoted by a petty Bengal civil servant. The Queen will possibly make amends for this gentleman's forgetfulness."

"You were in all this dreadful campaign, then?" asked she, eagerly.

"Through the whole of it. Held an independent command; got four times wounded; this was the last." And he laid bare a fearful cicatrice that almost surrounded his right arm above the wrist. "Refused the Bath."

"Refused it?"

"Why not. What object is it to me to be Sir Harry? Besides, a man who holds opinions such as mine, should accept no court favours. Colonel Calvert is a sufficient title."

"And you are a colonel already?"

"I was a major-general a month ago—local rank, of course. But why am I led to talk of these things? May I see the girls? Will they like to see me?"

"For that I can answer. But are your minutes not counted? These despatches?"

"I have thought of all that. This sword-cut has left a terrible 'tic' behind it, and travelling disposes to it, so that I have telegraphed for leave to send my despatches forward by Hassan, my Persian fellow, and rest myself here for a day or two. I know you'll not let me die unwatched, uncared for. I have not forgotten all the tender care you once bestowed upon me."

She knew not what to reply. Was she to tell him that the old green chamber, with its little stair into the garden, was still at his service? Was she to say, "Your old welcome awaits you there," or did she dread his presence amongst them, and even fear what reception the girls would extend to him?

"Not," added he, hastily, "that I am to inflict you with a sick man's company again. I only beg for leave to come out of a morning when I feel well enough. This inn here is very comfortable, and though I am glad to see Onofrio does not recognise me, he will soon learn my ways enough to suit me. Meanwhile, may I go back with you, or do you think you ought to prepare them for the visit of so formidable a personage?"

"Oh, I think you may come at once," said she, laughingly, but very far from feeling assured at the same time.

"All the better. I have some baubles here that I want to deposit in more suitable hands than mine. You know that we irregulars had more looting than our comrades, and I believe that I was more fortunate in this way than many others." As he spoke, he hastily opened and shut again several jewel-cases, but giving her time to glance—no more than glance—at the glittering objects they contained. "By the way," said he, taking from one of them a costly brooch of pearls, "this is the sort of thing they fasten a shawl with," and he gallantly placed it in her shawl as he spoke.

"Oh, my dear Colonel Calvert!"

"Pray do not call me colonel. I am Harry Calvert for you, just as I used to be. Besides, I wish for nothing that may remind me of my late life and all its terrible excitements. I am a soldier tired, very tired of war's alarms, and very eager for peace in its best of all significations. Shall we go?"

"By all means. I was only thinking that you must reconcile yourself not to return to-night, and rough it how best you can at the villa."

"Let me once see my portmanteau in the corner of my old green room, and my pipe where it used to hang beside my watch over the chimney, and I'll not believe that I have passed the last two terrible years but in a dream. You could not fancy how I attach myself to that spot, but I'll give you a proof. I have given orders to my agent to buy the villa. Yes; you'll wake some fine morning and find me to be your landlord."

It was thus they talked away, rambling from one theme to the other, till they had gone a considerable way across the lake, when once more Calvert recurred to the strange circumstance that his name should never have come before them in any shape since his departure.

"I ought to tell you," said she, in some confusion, "that I once did make an effort to obtain tidings of you. I wrote to your cousin, Miss Sophia."

"You wrote to her!" burst he in, sternly; "and what answer did you get?"

"There it is," said she, drawing forth the letter, and giving it to him.

"'No claim! no right!' murmured he, as he re-read the lines; "'the name of the person she had dared to inquire after;' and you never suspected the secret of all this indignant anger?"

"How could I? What was it?"

"One of the oldest and vulgarest of all passions—jealousy! Sophy had heard that I was attached to your niece. Some good-natured gossip went so far as to say we were privately married. My old uncle, who only about once in a quarter of a century cares what his family are doing, wrote me a very insulting letter, reminding me of the year-long benefits he had bestowed upon me, and, at the close, categorically demanded 'Are you married to her?' I wrote back four words, 'I wish I was,' and there ended all our intercourse. Since I have won certain distinctions, however, I have heard that he wants to make submission, and has even hinted to my lawyer a hope that the name of Calvert is not to be severed from the old estate of Rocksley Manor; but there will be time enough to tell you about all these things. What did your nieces say to that note of Sophy's?"

"Nothing. They never saw it. Never knew I wrote to her."

"Most discreetly done on your part. I cannot say how much I value the judgment you exercised on this occasion."

The old lady set much store by such praise, and grew rather prolix about all the con-

siderations which led her to adopt the wise course she had taken.

He was glad to have launched her upon a sea where she could beat, and tack, and wear at will, and leave him to go back to his own thoughts.

"And so," said he, at last, "they are to be married before Christmas?"

"Yes; that is the plan."

"And then she will return with him to India, I take it."

She nodded.

"Poor girl! And has she not one friend in all the world to tell her what a life is before her as the wife of a third—no, but tenth-rate official—in that dreary land of splendour and misery, where nothing but immense wealth can serve to gloss over the dull uniformity of existence, and where the income of a year is often devoted to dispel the ennui of a single day? India, with poverty, is the direst of all penal settlements. In the bush, in the wilds of New Zealand, in the far-away islands of the Pacific, you have the free air and healthful breezes of heaven. You can bathe without having an alligator for your companion, and lie down on the grass without a cobra on your carotid; but, in India, life stands always face to face with death, and death in some hideous form."

"How you terrify me!" cried she, in a voice of intense emotion.

"I don't want to terrify, I want to warn. If it were ever my fate to have a marriageable daughter, and some petty magistrate—some small district judge in Bengal—asked her for a wife, I'd say to my girl, 'Go and be a farm servant in New Caledonia. Milk cows, rear lambs, wash, scrub, toil for your daily bread in some land where poverty is not deemed the "plague;" but don't encounter life in a society where to be poor is to be despicable—where narrow means are a stigma of disgrace.'"

"Joseph says nothing of all this. He writes like one well contented with his lot, and very hopeful for the future."

"Hasn't your niece some ten or twelve thousand pounds?"

"Fifteen."

"Well, he presses the investment on which he asks a loan, just as any other roguish speculator would, that's all."

"Oh, don't say that, Mr. Calvert. Joseph is not a rogue."

"Men are rogues according to their capacity. The clever fellows do not need roguery, and achieve success just because they are stronger and better than their neighbours; but I don't want to talk of Loyd; every consideration of the present case can be entertained without him."

"How can that be, if he is to be her husband?"

"Ah! If—if. My dear old friend, when an if comes into any question, the wisest way is not to debate it, for the simple reason that applying our logic to what is merely imaginary is very like putting a superstructure of masonry over a house of cards. Besides, if we must talk with a hypothesis, I'll put mine, 'Must she of necessity marry this man, if he insist on it?'"

"Of course; and the more, that she loves him."

"Loves him! Have I not told you that you are mistaken there? He entrapped her at first into a half admission of caring for him, and, partly from a sense of honour, and partly from obstinacy, she adheres to it. But she does so just the way people cling to a religion, because nobody has ever taken the trouble to convert them to another faith."

"I wish you would not say these things to me," cried she, with much emotion. "You have a way of throwing doubts upon everything and everybody, that always makes me miserable, and I ask myself afterwards, Is there nothing to be believed? Is no one to be trusted?"

"Not a great many, I'm sorry to say," sighed he. "It's no bright testimony to the goodness of the world, that the longer a man lives the worse he thinks of it. I surely saw the flutter of white muslin through the trees yonder. Oh dear, how much softer my heart is than I knew of! I feel a sort of choking in the throat as I draw near this dear old place. Yes, there she is—Florence herself. I remember her way of waving a handkerchief. I'll answer it as I used to do." And he stood up in the boat and waved his handkerchief over his head with a wide and circling motion. "Look! She sees it, and she's away to the house at speed. How she runs! She could not have mustered such speed as that when I last saw her."

"She has gone to tell Milly, I'm certain."

He made no reply, but covered his face with his hands, and sat silent and motionless. Meanwhile the boat glided up to the landing-place, and they disembarked.

"I thought the girls would have been here to meet us," said Miss Grainger, with a pique she could not repress; but Calvert walked along at her side, and made no answer.

"I think you know your way here," said she with a smile, as she motioned him towards the drawing-room.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXI. PEACE.

LILY'S life in the Marais was, for six months, peaceable, and uneventful, and happy. One day was like another, but all the days were quiet and cheerful, and they passed swiftly by. Lily rose at eight, and took Madame de Kergolay her coffee and milk in her bed-chamber. Lily read to her, over her own breakfast, the news from the only journal which was permitted to penetrate into the establishment: the Legitimist Gazette de France. Madame de Kergolay was no very violent politician, but her convictions were firm. The iron had long since been forged into steel. She spoke of Napoleon as "the too celebrated M. de Bonaparte." Whenever she alluded to Robespierre it was with a shudder, but without invective. She called him "that miserable man." Louis the Sixteenth was, to her, always "the martyr king." Marie Antoinette, Madame was not very enthusiastic about — her career, she observed, was "equivocally tenebrous;" but she regarded the Duc de Berri as the victim of perfidy, and the Duchesse d'Angoulême as a saint. The house of Orleans, then regnant in France, she named with sorrow, but without asperity, as "the ingrates of the cadet branch." She seemed (with one exception) to bear no malice towards any of the deplorably famous characters of the revolutionary epoch. As Talleyrand did, she always spoke of the philosopher of Ferney as "Monsieur de Voltaire." She gave Mirabeau his title of count, and admitted the eloquence of Camille Desmoulins and the patriotism of Madame Roland. But if ever the name of Jean Jacques Rousseau were mentioned in her presence, her cheek flushed, and her voice trembled with indignation. "The vulture in dove's feathers!" she was wont to cry. "The sentimentalist who wreathed his murderous poniard in fine phrases. The philanthropist who would not have children whipped, and yet sent his helpless babes to the Foundling Hospital!" And for poor crazy Jean Jacques there was no charity to be expected from the Baronne de Kergolay.

About ten o'clock the lecture of the Gazette de France was concluded, and Lily was allowed to enjoy what was to her a most delightful privilege. She went out to market with Babette, the homely femme de charge. At first her relations with this woman were of a slightly embarrassing nature. Babette seemed to be under a continual nervous apprehension lest Lily should think that she was jealous of her, but the girl's gentle and unassuming nature gradually gained confidence in the housekeeper's mind, and before a fortnight was over she told Lily that she loved her next to Madame de Kergolay. The convict's wife was zealously but unaffectedly pious; and she never went to market without going to church for a few minutes.

When Lily returned from market it was nearly noon, and the déjeûner à la fourchette, or midday breakfast, was served. Until two or three in the afternoon she worked at some of the marvellous tasks of embroidery which were always in hand, or else she read to Madame de Kergolay. Novels were not entirely banished from the good dame's intellectual course. The feuilleton novel was, it need not be said, proscribed; the wild productions of the romantic school were likewise inadmissible; and the baronne had probably never heard of George Sand or of Paul de Kock. But the genteel fictions of M. le Vicomte d'Arlincourt, and the decorous numbers of M. le Vicomte de Chateaubriand, in French, with Walter Scott and Miss Porter in English, were considered worthy of entry, and were listened to with complacency by Madame, and absolutely devoured by Lily.

After this, if the day were fine, came a walk. In her youth, perhaps, Madame had heard of the unholy kidnapping expeditions in the streets of Paris, by means of which, during the reign of the "well-beloved" and peculiarly abominable Louis the Fifteenth, the flesh and blood preserves of the Parc aux Cerfs were recruited. At any rate, Madame would never permit her protégée to go out alone. For seven years, confined by a painful and hopeless malady to her bed and her invalid chair, she had never left her third floor in the Marais; but she recognised the necessity for regular exercise in Lily's case. Sometimes Babette was deputed to accompany her in a two-hours' walk on the quays or in the Champs Elysées. Sometimes Vieux Sablons was commanded to escort her; but there were drawbacks to the advantages accruing from the pro-

tection of this faithful domestic. Vieux Sablons was a slave to the exigencies of style. Although with great difficulty he had been dissuaded from wearing, whenever he took his walks abroad, the silver-fringed cocked-hat which had been specially made for him when the emigrants returned in triumph with the allied troops in 1814, he insisted on carrying a portentous cane, with a gilt copper knob and two pendent acorns, and in tapping this staff on the ground from time to time as he walked, somewhat after the manner of the beadle at St. Germain des Prés during an ecclesiastical procession. The consequence was, that the gamins, or little blackguard boys of Paris, who are assuredly not to be beaten for impudence and cruel acumen by the youths of any other capital in Europe, were accustomed to laugh at Vieux Sablons, to call him "Marquis de Carabas," "Micromegas," "Voltigeur de Louis Quatorze," and the like, and to follow him, hooting and jeering, and occasionally casting mud and stones at him after the unhappily too frequent fashion of democratic and ill-trained juvenility. And these proceedings, naturally leading to "explications" between Vieux Sablons and the blackguard boys, in which the bamboo stick took somewhat too vivacious a part, a tumult was more than once the result, when Vieux Sablons had unpleasant altercations with the sergents de ville, not devoid of reference to a visit to the nearest post or guard house. Vieux Sablons experienced infinite pride and pleasure in escorting the "little m'amselle" as he called Lily—she was always to be little—but his style stood in his way, and the baroness would rarely suffer him to confront the perils of the little blackguards' satire.

At all events, Lily contrived to get a good bracing walk almost every fine day. At least twice a week Madame Prudence would look in to pay her respects to the baroness, and then it was she who would officiate as Lily's chaperone. Often, too, the Abbé Chatain would come, but ecclesiastical etiquette forbade that worthy man to be seen in the street with a young lady. Once, when Babette and Lily were walking in the garden of the Luxembourg, they came upon the abbé, who was sitting on a bench reading his breviary. He rose in haste as they approached, and, blushing scarlet, walked away. He pettishly warned Babette, the next time he came to the Marais, against "compromising" him. Poor Abbé Chatain! He, too, was a slave to style.

Once, also, when Lily and Madame Prudence had ventured beyond the Triumphal Arch at the top of the Champs Elysées, and were wandering though the then ill-tended thickets of the Bois de Boulogne, they came upon the entire Pension Marcassin undergoing the dolorous relaxation of the "promenade." The girls were all rigidly watched by governesses and sub-governesses, and bad marks were plenteously distributed for such offences as not keeping step, or turning the head over the shoulder to gaze at a quack's platform, or a Punch's show; while, for a wonder, at the head of the procession marched the terrible Mademoiselle—the Marcassin herself.

She eyed her former pupil and victim narrowly, and with an evil countenance, as, trembling in every limb, and feeling herself turn white and red by turns, Lily passed. The Marcassin had got well rid of the unprofitable scholar; she had a hold upon her, in case her friends should ever come forward; and yet she experienced a kind of cold rage at the thought that the girl had slipped through her fingers. It was so easy to punish the pupil who had no friends. It was so facile to torment the child who dared not complain. The Marcassin was vexed that, in a moment of weakness, she had permitted the abbé to take away the little English girl. Indeed, she was angry with the abbé altogether. He did not come so frequently as he used to come. He spent most of his leisure time in the Marais. He cared no more for tric-trac. He sounded the praises of the Baronne de Kergolay too often, and too warmly. As for Lily, he spoke of her goodness, her meekness, her docility, in a manner which, according to Mademoiselle Marcassin, was perfectly sickening. "Ce bonhomme d'abbé radote—he maunders," quoth the strong-minded schoolmistress. "I must seek out another director for the Pension Marcassin."

However, she knew that she had lost her prey, and was content to glower at the girl as she saw her, happy and prosperous, and with the glow of health upon her cheek. The governesses, taking the cue from the Marcassin, surveyed Lily and her companion with supercilious sneers, but their private comments failed to harmonise with the public recognition they had bestowed on the ex-pupil.

"She has been adopted by a duchess," one whispered.

"A duchess; bah! by a poverty-stricken old emigrant baroness out of the Vendée, rather. A pensioner on the ancient civil list, probably. My father was out in the Bocage. He was a Bleu. He knew all ces gens-là, and had four Kergolays shot in one day."

"It is no matter. La petite looks very well. She is not amiss, la petite."

"She was always an affectionate and obedient little thing, and it went to one's heart to have to punish her when she had committed no misdeeds, merely because such were the orders of superior authority."

"Well, she is out of the lion's den.—*Will* you walk straight, Tavernier l'Ainée, and refrain from using your fingers as castanets, or shall I report you, for the fifth time during the existing promenade, to Mademoiselle Espréménil, for ultimate reprimand and correction by Madame?"

The misdeeds of Mademoiselle Tavernier the elder, who was a very muscular young Christian indeed, and always scandalising the proprietors of the pensionnat by ill-repressed acrobatic feats, drove Lily out of the minds of the governesses, and half a minute after the scholastic cortége had

passed by, she was forgotten by all save the Marcassin. But the Marcassin remembered her very well.

Madame Prudence had not beheld this little scene unmoved. She had, it will be remembered, an old feud with the schoolmistress; and, deliberately spitting on the ground, with certain solemn expressions of disparagement and defiance, she drew Lily's arm under hers, and walked on at a quick pace.

Lily did not fail to tell Madame de Kergolay, when they reached home, of her little adventure. The baroness deemed it her duty gently to chide the priest's housekeeper for her intemperance of language towards Mademoiselle Marcassin, but added the expression of a hope that she had not heard it.

"With a thousand reverences towards yourself, Madame la Baronne, and begging pardon for having spoken in the language of the people to which I belong, and against the canons of Christian charity which have been taught me by M. l'Abbé Chatain, I most sincerely wish that Mademoiselle Marcassin did hear what I said. Too long she tormented at her ease this dear innocent child; and the stories which the abbé has told me of her cruelty and tyranny have made me, time after time, burn over with the desire of tearing her wicked old eyes out."

"That would be very wrong indeed, Madame Prudence"—it was the baroness who spoke. "We should forgive all our enemies, even as we hope to be forgiven."

"I humbly ask pardon," replied Madame Prudence, with a low curtsey; "and I will pray for Mademoiselle Bluebeards this very night; but I should like to pass a little quarter of an hour with her, nevertheless."

"And, I am sure," interposed Lily, "that I forgive her. It was nothing, perhaps, but temper."

"It was nothing, perhaps, but choux-fleurs à la sauce," Madame Prudence said afterwards, in good-humoured banter (but not in the baroness's presence), to Lily. "My poor little angel heart, I tell you that woman was made of marble. Marble! Lava of a volcano, rather. Some years ago it may have been boiling and red-hot, and now it is turned into stone."

The dinner-hour on the third floor in the Marais was invariably six o'clock. The bill of fare was always simple; but the style, on which Vieux Sablons so prided himself, was never lacking. Twice a week the baroness fasted. She did not expect Lily to do the same, and even endeavoured to dissuade her from following her example; but the girl thought, in her simple heart, that it would be selfish not to abstain from meat, as her friends did upon meagre days; and besides she thought the sorrel soup, the fish, the vegetables, and omelettes which Babette served up on non-flesh days, very nice and succulent. On Sundays and feasts, they had generally some little extra delicacy—a charlotte aux pommes, or a turkey stuffed with chesnuts.

After dinner came, on visiting evenings—that is to say, when Madame "received" on Tuesdays and Thursdays—a few very old gentlemen and a few very old ladies. They all seemed to have been shipwrecked, to have been knocked to pieces like the porcelain dessert services, and put together again. The Vidame de Barsac was seventy. He earned his living now as a teacher of English, a language he had acquired during the emigration. The Count de Panarion had been a mousquetaire gris. He was glad enough now, to do hack-work for a bookseller in the Rue St. Jacques. Monsieur de Fontanges had been a Knight of Malta. How he managed to earn a crust of bread now, was not precisely known. It was a delicate subject, and not much talked about. Madame Prudence, indeed, once hinted to Lily that the "poor dear man," as she called him, had been compelled to accept a post in the orchestra of a theatre, and played second fiddle at the Odéon for a hundred francs a month.

The ladies were as antique and as dilapidated as the gentlemen. They were marchionesses, countesses, or plain mesdames, but all of noble birth; one, Mademoiselle de Casteaunac, was a sentimental old maid, who had been a beauty. They were all miserably poor, hiding their heads in cheap boarding-houses, or cheaper garrets, or pining on the miserable pensions on the civil list, allocated by the government for the support of the decayed Bourbon aristocracy, and the sparse funds of which were supplemented every year by a grand ball at the Hôtel de Ville. The sentimental old maid had but one aspiration. She had an income amounting to the magnificent sum of twenty-five pounds a year. If she could only manage to raise it to forty (a thousand francs), they would receive her as a nun in one of the gloomiest and rigidest convents of the Faubourg St. Germain. It was not a bright prospect, but poor Sister Anne gazed at it wistfully from the tower of her spinsterhood. To be allowed to have your hair cut off, and to wear black serge and a veil; to be permitted to sleep on the boards, and scarify yourself with a horsehair vest, get up in the middle of the night to repeat the lamentations of Jeremiah, and subsist chiefly on stale bread and black radishes, and scourge yourself twice a week! Well, there are ambitions of various kinds, and Mademoiselle de Casteaunac's ambition extended no further than this. But she was deficient in her budget just fifteen pounds per annum, and her long-coveted bliss was unattainable. It is a practical age, indeed, when maceration costs money, and the treasurer of the vestal virgins expects a novice to come prepared with a compact sum in the Three per Cents.

These poor old people came and paid a feeble, fluttering court to Madame de Kergolay. She had lent—that is to say given—most of them money; the name she bore was honoured and famous, and they accorded her a sincere and awful homage. Of all the victims of the dreadful

revolution, none had suffered more deeply than the Baronne de Kergolay. She was almost a martyr. She had sat upon the steps of the scaffold. She had been in the tumbril. Her hair had fallen beneath Sanson's shears. Her husband, her father, her dearest friends and kinsmen, had been drowned in Robespierre's red sea. She said once, in sad playfulness, that she felt almost as though she had been decapitated, and her head had been sewn on again.

The entertainments in the Marais were not costly. Vieux Sablons, in connexion with the yellow wax candles in the silver sconces, provided all that was requisite in the way of style. For the rest, there was a little weak tea. The guests brought their own snuff, and what more could they want? They paid their little compliments, vented their meek complaints against the ungrateful government of the cadet branch, buzzed about their small scandals, and sometimes indulged in raillery, or drifted into dispute. Now and then a game at tric-trac or Boston was made up; and at ten o'clock all took their leave, and the establishment on the third floor went to bed.

CHAPTER XXXII. A SCAPEGRACE.

Said Vieux Sablons to Lily Floris, one morning—it was in the sixth month of her residence in the Marais:

"Little m'amselle, to-day there is 'bombance.'"

"I don't quite understand you, Vieux Sablons. Bombance! What is that?"

"True, I am an animal. Madame would pull my ears for talking to you in so rude a manner. Madame always speaks classically, and expects her domestics to observe good style in their language. I mean, that to-day there is a festival, a holiday, a gala."

"And why, Vieux Sablons? It is not a fête-day of your Church."

"Little puritan m'amselle! What do you know about our feasts or our fasts either? Though, for the matter of that, you insist upon making meagre whenever Madame does. But to-day is a secular holiday. The Scapegrace is coming."

"The Scapegrace! Who may he be?"

"Ah! you will find out soon enough. The scamp—the brigand—the ne'er-do-well—the good-for-nothing."

Lily turned hot and faint. Who was coming? She recalled the horrible story of Babette's husband. Was the convict expected?

"There!" exclaimed Vieux Sablons, good humouredly, as he observed the girl's agitation; "I am a brute, a buffalo, a rhinoceros, to terrify you so, little m'amselle. One would think I was announcing the advent of Le petit homme Rouge—the little Red Man who was wont to appear to Bonaparte. It is only M. Edgar Greyfaunt, Madame's graceless grand-nephew, who is coming."

"A-a-h!" murmured Lily; and it was a long-drawn "a-a-h."

"Don't be frightened. He will treat you as a child. Monsieur can only spare time for the grand dames of the Faubourg St. Germain. Monsieur even disdains to break the hearts of the grisettes in the Latin Quarter. Oh, Monsieur is very tenacious of his nobility."

"He is noble, then?"

"Is he not Madame's grand-nephew? Does she not come of an ancient and illustrious stock? But he has none of the Kergolay blood in him. He has nothing to do with the old manor of Vieux Sablons; and, between you and me, little m'amselle, I don't think much of his nobility, for ——"

"What, Vieux Sablons?"

The old man had come, suddenly, to a stop. He resumed, now, in some confusion: "What an imbecile I am! My tongue is always running away with me. I was going to say that I mistrusted his nobility because he is an Englishman. I cannot endure them, those sons of Albion. Why has he not a 'De' before his name? Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt! That sounds neither more nor less than the name of a bourgeois. But I forgot, beast that I am, that Madame herself was of Britannic origin, and that everything belonging to her, even in the remotest degree, must be noble."

"And I, too, am English, Vieux Sablons," remarked Lily, sadly.

"But you are not noble," returned the old man, simply.

"I don't know. I am Quite Alone."

"It is not your fault, little m'amselle. An enfant trouvé may be the descendant of Henri Quatre. But we were speaking of M. Edgar. The prodigal grand-nephew has condescended to announce his intention of paying us a visit. It is six months since Monsieur deigned to set his foot beneath our humble roof."

"Why does he stay away so long?"

"Why indeed. He professes to be very fond of his aunt. He can come often enough when he wants a billet of five hundred francs. But Monsieur has been away sketching, forsooth, and visiting the grand seigneurs and the grand dames at their châteaux. He despises the poor broken-down aristocracy of the Restoration. Nothing will suit him but the mushroom barons of Philippe, the newly-fledged peers of France, the marshals who, the day before yesterday, were drummer-boys. He visits the corps diplomatique. He is hand-in-glove with the Bourse. He is a favourite with bankers' wives. Oh, Monsieur is a man of fashion, the pet of Frascati's and the Café Anglais. Et tout ça n'est qu'un peintre. He is only a painter with a half-furnished atelier in the Rue Neuve des Augustins, and if it were not for the goodness of Madame, his grand-aunt, he would starve."

"Vieux Sablons," interposed Lily, gravely, "you are talking scandal. If Madame heard you, she would be very angry."

"Well, you are right, little m'amselle. I have no right to make observations; I, who am merely a poor valet de pied promoted to the chamber since our establishment has been reduced. Old Rococo, Monsieur the prodigal calls me. Yes, I am old, and broken, and rococo. I know nothing, save to preserve the traditions of the grand style we used to keep at Vieux Sablons, and to love, and serve Madame; and, if I survive her, my only wish is to be buried in the same cemetery, and the same grave, at right angles, at her feet. The old nobility used to grant such privileges to their faithful servitors."

Lily was very sorry to see the old man moved: for two big tears were coursing down his parchment cheek. M. Edgar Greyfaunt was, evidently, no favourite of his. But his devotion to the lightest behests of his mistress got the better of his own personal feelings, and he resigned himself to the task of killing the fatted calf in anticipation of the arrival of the prodigal grand-nephew.

It was a very busy day. The invalid was agitated, as she always was when Edgar was expected. She was tetchy, almost cross, and Lily had to follow out the recipe of smiling upon her, and kissing her a great many times before sunset. The marketing done that morning, was prodigious. Babette missed her out-door orisons. The famous turkey stuffed with chesnuts was prepared as a pièce de résistance. The dessert was on a sumptuous scale. Madame Prudence, by special permission of the Abbé Chatain, came to help; and, with the assistance of sundry little copper stewpans, and a red brick stove fed with charcoal, concocted entrées of so overpowering and titillating an odour, that the subtlety of the aroma penetrated even to the boudoir of Madame de Kergolay, who, smilingly, speculated as to whether it was the compote of pigeons, or the salmi of partridges—of both of which Edgar was very fond—that Madame Prudence was cooking.

As for Vieux Sablons, he rubbed and polished the plate until it seemed in danger of disappearing utterly under the influence of excessive attrition. Lily was told that she was not to do anything, and was even scolded by Madame de Kergolay for offering to arrange the dessert; but she stole away in the course of the afternoon to deck the dining-room table with flowers, and display the napkins in symmetrical shapes, and fit little frills of cut paper to the candles.

Vieux Sablons whispered to her about five o'clock that there would be champagne at dinner, and also Chambertin.

"It is the grand vin, the famous vintage of 1827," he added. "Madame has only five bottles of it left. Only imagine! What extravagance! But she would dissolve diamonds in his Chambertin, if it were possible, and she had them."

M. Edgar Greyfaunt came to dinner, but he came late. It was twenty minutes past six before he condescended to ascend the staircase and pull the horse-hoof attached to the silken cord. But had he come at twenty minutes past midnight he would have been welcome. It was not the slightest misfortune of Madame la Baronne de Kergolay that she literally idolised her graceless grand-nephew.

He was received in all ceremonious form, and with two lighted candles, by Vieux Sablons, triply powdered for the occasion.

"How are you, my ancient?" Lily heard him cry out in a loud ringing voice, in the vestibule. "The same inimitable make-up. Vieux habits vieux galons! What a prodigious old mannequin it is. At the Italiens, mon cher, thou wouldst be invaluable as lacquey to Doctor Dulcamara."

He was speaking in French, confidently and fluently, but with a broad Saxon accent. He thee'd and thou'd Vieux Sablons, not affably, but superciliously, and whenever he called him "tu," or "toi," the old domestic, who was only accustomed to endure that familiarity from the lips of his mistress, bowed humbly, but visibly shuddered.

Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt was ushered into the presence of his grand-aunt. He sank on one knee with a becoming grace enough, and pressed her hand to his lips. It was the homage of aristocrat to aristocrat. But when he rose, he tossed his head aloft and threw an insolent look around, as if to compensate for the act of humility he had just performed.

The compensation was almost gratuitous. There was no one in the room at whom to toss his head or look insolent, but a poor little English girl.

When his grand-aunt had folded him to her breast at least twenty times; when she had kissed his forehead, his cheeks, his eyes, his lips, over and over again; when she had smoothed his hair, and pressed his hands between her own white palms; when she had bidden him to stand away from her a little, that she might better regard him; when she had recalled him to fondle and caress him; when she had called him her darling Edgar, her hope, her pride, her sole comfort and stay in old age—she bethought herself that they, too, were not Quite Alone, and that there stood one present who was. She held out her kind hand to Lily, and pulling the trembling, blushing girl forward, proceeded to present her to M. Edgar.

"This is Miss Lily Floris," she said, in English, "a little English friend of mine. She is very good, and quiet, and useful, and I love her very dearly. You must be very kind to her, Edgar, and not at all sarcastic, for she is very young and timid."

Edgar made Lily a bow which was accompanied by a nod, and supplemented by a sneer. It seemed to say, "You are infinitely beneath me, my young friend, but since my aunt desires it, I will condescend to be civil to you." The girl shrunk, but, alas! not angrily, from his bold gaze. In the remotest corner of her heart the trembling little fingers of her soul were already beginning to set up an idol. As yet, what had

she possessed to bow down to and worship? And how many of us are there who prostrate themselves every day to stocks and stones, and think them gods?

Edgar Greyfaunt was eminently handsome. They were all there: the trappings, and gewgaws, and flounces, and furbelows of man's comeliness that drive silly women out of their wits. He was tall and shapely, and his nose was aquiline, and his teeth were white. His hands and feet were small, and his auburn hair curled in rich luxuriance over his broad white forehead. Nature had provided him with every luxury. All the accessories and addenda of beauty he possessed. None of the trifling adjuncts, the absence of which the cunning eye of a woman quickly detects, were absent. The slight moustache he wore became him infinitely. There was a touch of softness in his smile to relieve its impudence. There were silken eyelashes to veil his bold glance. There was a dash of music in his loud clear voice. There was strength as well as elegance in his limbs. Women like a Narcissus grafted on the Colossus of Rhodes. The middlingly handsome man has no chance with them. To succeed, you must be either a model of manly and athletic beauty, or else as ugly as Jack Wilkes or Gabriel de Mirabeau, and with the serpent or the devil's tongue. And sometimes squinting Wilkes and pock-pitted Mirabeau are more successful than Adonis the Life Guardsman and Antinous the muscular heathen.

They went in to dinner, and the prodigal grand-nephew was feasted. Lily kept her eyes consistently on her plate from the potage to the dessert, yet for all that she was perfectly well aware that his highness the grand-nephew's gaze was seldom away from her face. Madame de Kergolay ascribed her blushings and tremblings, her droppings of knives and forks and napkins, to timidity. To what other cause, indeed, could they be ascribed?

It is needless to give an accurate report of the table-talk. Madame de Kergolay uttered little beyond interjections of admiration and affection. Lily said nothing at all. As for Edgar Greyfaunt he simply bragged; and a handsome braggadocio has little to fear when his only two possible interlocutors are a fond doting old woman and a shrinking girl. He bragged about everything in general, and himself in particular. About the praise M. Delaroche, whose pupil he was, had bestowed upon his study in oil from Michael Angelo, and the chance he had of carrying off the Grand Prize of Rome at the approaching competition at the School of Fine Arts. About his jokes in the studio, and his fencing matches with his fellow-students, whom he always vanquished. About a young painter scarcely so old as he, who had just got the cross of the Legion of Honor. "Everybody admits that I am superior to him in form, in composition, and in colour," quoth Edgar, modestly; "but then, you see, I am such a fainéant, such a lazy fellow. Never mind, I shall catch up young Rapinard in a year or two."

Madame de Kergolay fondly believed that he would, and, in her secret soul, marvelled whatever those tasteless idiots, the Jury of the Exposition of Paintings, could have been about, to recommend Rapinard for the cross. It is true that Prince Greyfaunt had never exhibited anything. He told his great-aunt, with his easy laugh, that Rapinard was the son of an employé in the Pompes Funèbres—an undertaker's man; that his mother kept a bureau de nourrices—a servants' registry office; that he had a head like Quasimodo in Notre-Dame de Paris, and one leg shorter than the other. Madame de Kergolay was only acquainted with one Quasimodo—the duly calendared saint of that name; but, good, charitable, Christian woman as she was, she could scarcely help despising the bourgeois Rapinard, the son of the croquemort. She did not know that Rapinard rose at six every morning, to draw from the round till nine; that he painted all day; that he sat up half the night poring over his Albinus, and drawing the bones of the skeleton, and the upper and lower layers of muscles backwards. And, had she known that Rapinard lived chiefly on red eggs and sous'-worths of Brie cheese; that he kept his father the under-undertaker, who was blind, and his mother the registry-shop keeper, who was paralytic; and that he was accustomed to say, "Never mind; we shall be better off when I am a member of the Institute and an officer of the Legion" (and Rapinard, I rejoice to say, is both, at this present writing); had Madame la Baronne been reminded of these trifling things, her opinion concerning Rapinard would have changed, I warrant, to a surprising degree.

But there was no end to the Sultan Greyfaunt's bragging. He condescended to bestow a long evening on his aged relative, and, when he was tired of bragging about art, he gave fashion a turn. With vain-glorious loquacity, he dwelt upon the grand houses to which he had been invited during his sketching tour; "for, although," he remarked, apologetically, "I mean to be a historical painter, one mustn't lose sight of the value of landscapes in backgrounds." His talk was of dukes and counts, of presidents of the chamber, and keepers of the seals. When his grand-aunt asked after the bearer of some memorable name, some waif and stray of the great revolutionary shipwreck, he laughed.

"Ask me after the Doge of Venice. All these people are as rococo as Vieux Sablons yonder, and are sensibly hidden away in the Marais like rats in a hole. Now and then, I cross the river to the Rue de Lille or de Bourgogne, and look up the respectable antiquities left high and dry by the receding tide. Do you know, my aunt, there are still people who believe in the most Christian King Charles the Tenth, and speak of that little boy over yonder as Henry the Fifth?"

"And you, my nephew," the old lady, in mild

expostulation, interposed: "do you forget that I too have touched the hand of the sainted Charles, and that my only king is Henry?"

"There was a king in Thule—history of five hundred years ago—history of the Deluge," returned Edgar, coolly. "I might just as well revive the claims of the Lancashire Greyfaunts to half a dozen dormant peerages. I dare say we are entitled to them," he added, with a proud look.

Then he went on to say that one must live with the moderns, and take the world as it came. "A banker's daughter, with a dowry of two millions, and a pedigree out of the Rue des Mauvaises Paroles; or Mademoiselle the Marquis's eldest, with nothing but her virtue (and that of the most acidulated character), and a genealogical tree as wide-spreading as a banyan. No, no, give me Miss Banker and her fat money-bags."

Warmed by the Chambertin, he began to speak of the Jockey Club, to which he intended to obtain admittance some day; of steeple-chases and billiard-matches; of the cafés and the Bois de Boulogne; of the duels he had fought, and the bets he had made (and won, of course); of the actresses——

But, when he came to the dramatic chapter of his adventures, Madame de Kergolay discreetly whispered to Lily, and she and Vieux Sablons wheeled the invalid's chair, not, as was customary, into the boudoir bed-chamber, but into the salon—the which, in honour of the grand-nephew's visit, was lighted up with no less than six wax candles. This was not one of Madame's reception nights. She only expected the Abbé Chatain, and found him waiting for her.

TOM MOODY AND CO.

What Englishman possessing any share of the national vanity, or any proper self-respect, would declare his ignorance respecting the manners and customs of the hunting-field, and the inner life of that grandest of British field sports, fox-hunting? We all knew Tom Moody, the whipper-in, well, of course! We know about bright Chanticleer proclaiming the morn, and old Towler joining the cry, and the southerly wind and the cloudy sky, and the

> Hey, ho, Chivy!
> Hark forward! hark forward! tanti-vy,

with very quick enunciation and very high upper note, and all the rest of it. We know Fores's hunting sketches, and those admirable woodcuts of Mr. John Leech's, where the "swells" are always flying their fences, and the "snobs" are always coming to grief, where the pretty girls, whom no one else has ever so charmingly portrayed, are rushing at bulfinches, while those glorious boys, whom no one else has ever attempted, are running their Shetlands at raspers. There is a popular style of literature now, the hero of which is always an athletic, horsey man, and, nowithstanding his weight, making it a point to be up with the first flight throughout the run, generally winning the heiress and the Great Poldoody Steeple-chase at one and the same time, or reproaching the young lady who has jilted him for a richer suitor, by taking some terrific and horribly dangerous leap in the very teeth of the pony she has driven in a low wicker carriage to the meet. Thanks in some measure to the convenience of railways, there are probably but few of us with a sporting turn who have not been out with the Queen's stag-hounds, the Surrey fox-hounds, or who have not, while staying at Brighton, enjoyed a day's sport under the generalship of that glorious specimen of the English yeoman who hunts the Brook-side harriers. But notwithstanding all these experiences, I have an idea that very few persons, even those who take great interest in such matters, have any notion of the enormous expense and trouble consequent on the management of a pack of hounds, and it is for the benefit of those who are thus ignorant, and who may be glad of having the whole information in a handy shape, and in a small compass, without the trouble of reference to encyclopædias or heavy statistical works, that these observations, derived first-hand from two of the first masters of hounds in England, and carefully compared with standard authorities, are written.

And first, of the hounds. The number of couple in a pack of fox-hounds depends on how many days in a week the pack is hunted. If twice a week (or with an occasional extra day, called a "bye-day"), twenty-five couple will be sufficient; for three days a week, thirty-five couple; and for four days a week, forty-five couple will be required. The prices of hounds vary according to demand and supply. Draft-hounds, i.e. such as have been selected for steadiness and scenting powers, generally average three guineas a couple, but the safest plan for an intending master of hounds is to consult the advertising columns of sporting journals, and see whether any well-known and established packs are for sale. At the present time of writing there is but one pack in the market, and for them is asked thirteen guineas a couple. Three or four hundred guineas is a common price, and one is not likely to get anything very special for the money, but a good pack has now and then gone cheap, and been picked up for five hundred pounds. No man with any sporting nous would refuse to give a thousand guineas for a pack of hounds with a thoroughly established reputation. Much larger prices are on record. From Mr. Blaine we learn that in 1826 Mr. Warde, a well-known sportsman, sold his pack for two thousand guineas, while in more recent times Mr. Foljambe's hounds, sold by auction, in lots, at Tattersall's, realised three thousand six hundred pounds, one lot of five couple fetching three hundred and eighty guineas, and another of four couple and a half four hundred and eighty guineas. Here is your preliminary expense.

Having provided your pack, you will, of course, have prepared your kennel for them,

which will not be a small item in your outlay. As you can expend fifteen shillings or five hundred pounds on a dressing-case according to the style of article you require, so will the cost of the erection of your kennel depend entirely on your taste and the contents of your purse. The Duke of Richmond's kennel cost ten thousand pounds, the Duke of Bedford's is four hundred and fifty feet in length. You will probably be satisfied with something less magnificent than either of these, but there are, nevertheless, certain necessaries which it is incumbent on a kennel-builder to provide. Among these are a boiling-house for the meat, lodging-rooms for the hounds, a grass or gravel court into which to turn the dogs while the lodging-rooms are being aired, a plentiful supply of good water, and a lodging-room for either your huntsman, whipper-in, or kennel attendant, who must be so close to the hounds that, should any quarrelling take place, they can hear his voice, or the crack of his whip, or the sound of a bell, which he could pull, and which should hang over where the dogs sleep. Hounds are very savage in kennel, and after a fight in which a dog has been killed, his body is sometimes devoured by the rest. Old sportsmen have an anecdote, too, of a whipper-in being torn to pieces on going into the kennel at night, in his shirt, in which dress the hounds did not recognise him, and without first calling to them. The best food for hounds is oatmeal and horse-flesh, boiled, vegetables, *after* hunting, boiled with the meat, greaves, mashed potatoes, and skim-milk. Biscuits and greaves, also boiled, form excellent food in the summer or off-season. All food should be given cold, and it should be boiled into pudding one day and given the next day. The cost of feeding hounds depends on the price of oatmeal, but about twelve pounds per annum per couple may be looked upon as an average, perhaps a low-average sum. Hounds are called by name, and, as it is termed, "drawn," to be fed in three, four, or five couples at a time. The door is wide open, and the meat-trough is in view of the hungry pack, but, until called out, not one attempts to stir. Says Mr. Dryden:

> Abra was ready ere he named her name,
> And when he called another, Abra came.

It is very lucky that Abra was a lady and not a hound. A hound thrusting in or coming out of his turn, not when his name is called, is sent back with a flea in his ear. This is to make them know their own names, and is the only way of teaching them. The late Mr. Apperley (the celebrated "Nimrod") gives a remarkable instance of the discipline at feeding-time, which occurred at Sir Bellingham Graham's. "Vulcan, the crowning ornament of the pack, was standing near the door waiting for his name to be called. I happened to mention it, though in rather an under tone; then in he came and licked Sir Bellingham's hand; but though his head was close to the trough, and the grateful viands smoking under his nose, he never attempted to eat; but on his master saying to him, 'Go back, Vulcan, you have no business here,' he immediately retreated, and mixed with the hungry crowd." Hounds should be fed once a day, with delicate exceptions; that is to say, a hound with a delicate constitution will require a few minutes longer at the trough, and may require to be fed twice in the course of the day. Before quitting this branch of the subject, let us give two important cautions. Build your kennel in a dry spot, thoroughly well drained, and so avoid rheumatism, kennel lameness, and nine-tenths of the ills to which dogflesh is heir; and feed your hounds late at night, and so ensure a comfortable rest for them, their keepers, and you and your guests, if the kennel be at all near the house.

And now of the staff and the stud. Foremost and most important among the former is the huntsman, who should be in the prime of life, combining vigour and experience. Too young a man is apt to be fussy, self-opinionated, and wanting in judgment; too old a man to be slow and incapable of sufficient bodily exertion. Your huntsman should think of hunting and nothing else; should be submissive to no cap-ribbon, no slave to drink, which would be fatal, no gadabout, taproom loiterer, pothouse frequenter. During the season his exercise will prevent anything he takes doing him any harm; during the off-season he will find plenty to do in drilling his pack, and acquainting himself with their various peculiarities. He must ride well always, sometimes desperately, and he must be firm yet courteous with those terrific strangers who crop up occasionally at all meets, and who will over-ride the hounds. Your cockney sportsman, and your over-excitable enthusiast, who, the one from ignorance, the other from irrepressible impulse, ride close upon hounds, are the good huntsman's direst foes. Hounds may be driven miles before the scent by the pursuance of such a practice, and it is not to be wondered at if the huntsman sometimes loses his temper. He is a servant, however, and must moderate his language, but he may safely leave the unhappy transgressor to the remarks of his master, which are generally very full flavoured. Sometimes the victim declines to bear such language.

The breeding, rearing, and training of the young hounds is entirely to be done by the huntsman, and in the field he is master of the situation, and directs every step in progress by his voice or his horn, in the blowing of which he must be really scientific. There will be one or two whippers-in, according to the size or status of the pack. If there be two, the first is but little inferior to the huntsman, and should be qualified to take his place in his absence. One of the whips should always remain with the pack, to prevent the younger dogs from running riot, and giving tongue heedlessly. The pad-groom is also an essential adjunct to a hunting establishment, for it is his duty to follow to cover with the second horse, and he requires either a thorough knowledge of the country, or an innate appreciation of topography, to enable him to keep the hounds within view, to be able

to skirt and cut across the country, and withal to meet his master at the proper place with a fresh and unblown animal. Of course the keep of such a staff is costly. The wages of huntsmen average from eighty to one hundred pounds a year, with a cottage and certain perquisites; but there is a noble duke, an enthusiast in the sport, who gives his huntsman two hundred pounds per annum. This, however, is of course an utterly exceptional wage.

The first whip will cost five-and-twenty shillings a week, the second a guinea, the pad-groom a guinea, and the kennel-feeder, if there be one, another guinea a week.

The wages of neither huntsmen nor whips are high when it is remembered what brutes they ride, and that they are never expected to crane at anything, but to fly ox-fence, brook, anything that may come in their way. Nimrod relates several anecdotes which he heard from whips of their falls; one complained that his horse was "a dunghill brute," because, "not content with tumbling, he lies on me for half an hour when he's down;" another, having had his horse fall on him, and roll him "as a cook would a pie-crust," got up and limping off, said, "Well, now I *be* hurt." Another acknowledged to having broken three ribs on one side and two on the other, both collar-bones, one thigh, and having had his scalp almost torn off him by a kick from a horse. Nor, if we may credit the same excellent authority, is there much thought given to these unfortunates. "Who is that under his horse in the brook?" "Only Dick Christian" (a celebrated rough-rider*), answers Lord Forester, "and it's nothing new to him!" "But he'll be drowned!" exclaims Lord Kinnaird. "I shouldn't wonder," observes Mr. William Coke, "but the pace is too good to inquire."

In addition to huntsmen's whips you will require two or three helpers in your stable at wages of from twelve shillings to fifteen shillings a week, and an earth-stopper, who will get half a guinea a week. In this estimate I have said nothing of the saddler's nor of the farrier's bills, most important items.

And now you have to provide horses for your staff and for yourself—dependent, of course, on the number of your servants and the number of dogs you hunt. A huntsman and two whips will require two horses each for two days a week, or eight horses for the three for three days, the pad-groom will require a horse, and there should be a couple of hacks for messages. The master may do with three, or may be able to afford more — I should say he will require four, barring accidents. The precise cost of hunters is entirely a matter of weight and fancy. A ten-stone master of hounds with an eye for a horse, good judgment, and talent in bargaining, can, in the country, mount himself more than decently for fifty guineas, whereas in town the price would be doubled. With increase in weight the price runs up frightfully, and an eighteen-stone man would give five hundred guineas for a horse, and think himself lucky if the mount suited him in every respect. No amount of weight prevents a man from following, or even keeping hounds, if the passion be on him and he can afford a proper mount; there are masters of hounds of seven and a half stone weight, and there are one or two ranging between eighteen and twenty stone. To get themselves properly carried, men of the latter stamp must expend an enormous sum in horseflesh, requiring, as they do, the speed and jumping-power of the hunter, combined with the solid strength of the dray-horse. The horses for the huntsman and the whips are often good screws, or perhaps horses which, unless in constant work, are "rushers," or "pullers," or "rusty." When these animals are kept in perpetual motion, have a good deal of hard work, and can have any sudden freak of fancy taken out of them by a judiciously administered "bucketing," they are generally useful mounts for servants. A horse with a bad mouth is often a good horse for a whip, or when an original delicate mouth is lost, for very few uneducated men have light hands. Horses a little worn are often bought for servants, or very young horses, if the men are good workmen, are bought and handed over to the servants to be made. Forty pounds may be taken as an average price for whips' horses, sixty pounds for huntsmen's mounts, but there is a master in England who pays a couple of hundred guineas for his huntsman's horses, but then the huntsman stands six feet two. These horses are turned out from the 21st of April, and one man can look after and cut grass for six horses, but the average price of their keep throughout the year is twenty-five pounds each; a master of hounds may reckon that the keep of each of his own mounts is forty pounds a year.

In summing up the question of expense, it will be well to bear in mind the axiom of a well-known sportsman of bygone days, that "a master of hounds will never have his hand out of his pocket, and must always have a guinea in it;" but it may be laid down as a principle that the expense generally depends upon the prudence, experience, and interest possessed by the owner of the pack and the stud. Two men have worked different counties in a season, one at the fourth of the expense incurred by the other, and the difference in sport has been inappreciable. It may, however, be taken as a fact that the expenses of a fox-hound pack for hunting *twice* a week, including cost of hounds, horses, huntsmen, and stable attendants, will be about fifteen hundred, and for three times a week, two thousand pounds.

Besides the packs of hounds kept by private gentlemen, there are many subscription packs. About a thousand a year is the average amount of a subscription pack's income, though some have larger revenue. Men of very large means will subscribe eighty or a hundred to the pack, but twenty-five pounds a year is regarded as a very decent subscription from a man whose

* See All the Year Round, vol. ii., page 396.

income is under two thousand. The system of "capping," i.e. the huntsman's touting for a cap, has fallen into disuse, and would be winked at but by very few masters: certainly no huntsman would be permitted to "cap" a stranger joining the meet, save in such places as Brighton, where the meet is attended by very many strangers, and where a "half-crown cap" is the regular thing.

Such are some few particulars of the cost of the noblest of British field-sports, a pastime which lasts from youth to age, and, if we may credit the oft-quoted anecdote, becomes the ruling passion strong in death, for it is related that on its being broken to two sporting squires, who were at sea, that the vessel must inevitably founder, one of them turned to the other, and said with a sigh, "Ah, Bob! no more Uckenby Whin!" the name of a never-failing cover.

MORE TRIFLES FROM CEYLON.

It is the last watch of the night, and Venus and the least scrap of a moon are still shining in the east as I drive out of my gate in an "American waggon," and start on a six days' tour through the district. Almost every one in Ceylon affects what is called here an American waggon, although Americans proper, that is, men from the States, ignore the vehicle, and say that they never saw anything like it in their own country. I believe Canada is where it was first "riz."

As I go on, the natives are beginning to bestir themselves: the "coffee and hopper" woman is washing her cups on the verandah of her hut, thatched with the leaves of the cocoa-nut palm. Presently she will take some rice-flour, which was the previous night soaked in cocoa-nut water and a little toddy to cause fermentation. Then she will add the milk of the cocoa-nut, for that useful and wonderful fruit, like the cream-jugs on our tables, contains a supply not only of milk, but also of water, with this advantage on the side of the nut, that the two are unmixed, and are both clean. For *that*, as I look at it, is the hardship; not that there is water in our milk, but that it should also be dirty water, so that insult is added to injury. After our dusky friend has completed the arrangements aforesaid, and added a little salt to the mess, she will, with a spoon made of the shell of the cocoa-nut, pour some of it into a chatty or earthenware vessel, which is being heated over a fire; in a few minutes a commotion takes place within the chatty, the shapeless mass assumes a form; it has not only "a local habitation," but also "a name"—that name is "hopper"—and, if you dip the delicious morsel, while hot and succulent, into your coffee, you will find that it is anything but an "airy nothing," but, on the contrary, it will stick to your ribs for many a mile on your morning's march. Green be the sod upon the grave of the man who first composed a curry, and of the woman who invented the "hopper"—which last word is a villanous corruption of the Singhalese "aappe." And now the imbibers in prospective of coffee, and the masticators in futuro of hoppers, begin to pursue their way, looking in the early gloaming, wrapped in their white cloths, like so many resuscitated corpses. When that plucky old dame, Madame Pfeiffer, visited Ceylon, and drove through the outskirts of Colombo one morning very early in the Kandy mail-coach, she saw a number of sleepers in white lying about the verandahs, and took it into her head, or was hoaxed into believing, that these were the dead bodies of persons who in this deadly climate had died within the houses during the night, and who had been placed without for removal and burial before the sun was up! So much for the impressions of a rapid voyage, given either by Pfeiffer, Drummer, or any other circumferentor of the world. He who runs may read, but he should not write.

This is the hot season of the year, but by a merciful provision the nights are cool, and at this hour the breeze is refreshing. After a few miles' drive I reach a broken bridge, where my horse is waiting for me, and mount.

> And now the morn in russet mantle clad,
> Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill.

Soon after, the rude sun, with his red face, takes a peep over the shoulders of the bashful morn. Then up come his whole head and shoulders, next his body, and the eastern day has fairly begun.

Our way lies through the late reaped rice-fields. The cattle are now pasturing amongst the stubble, closely attended by the white storks, which relieve them of the ticks and other insects. There is a good deal of mutual accommodation of this kind in Ceylon. It may be seen constantly at noonday in the verandah of the native's hut, where, stretched at full length, with dishevelled locks, he reposes his head upon the lap of his tender spouse, while she, kind soul, does the office of the white stork for him. The same benevolent act is sometimes performed by a mother on her infants; it is one of endearment, corresponding to our stroking a child's head. The Buddhist priest—forbidden to take life of any kind, how minute soever, who strains the very water he drinks lest there be any living creature in it, ignorant of the existence of animalculæ invisible to the eye—how is he to do? He gets over the difficulty by shaving his head, face, and eyebrows, and so steals a march on his enemies. The crows are of great assistance to cows and sheep, and I saw one very earnestly recommending himself to a pig, on whose back he was making strenuous efforts to maintain his seat, but piggy would not be thus assisted on any terms whatsoever. He started off at full gallop, protesting, by loud and angry squeaks, against being ridden. The crow kept his seat gallantly for some time, but found the paces of a pig rather uncomfortable, so he got off, quoting the following lines from Spenser:

The donghill kind
Delights in filth and fowle incontinence;
Let Gryll, be Gryll, and have his hoggish minde;
But let us hence depart whilest wether serves and winde.

And so saying, he tried what could be done with a dog that was looking on hard by. There is one animal in Ceylon that has no feathered friends, and it is not to be wondered at. I mean the jackal; and the manner in which he is said to rid himself of his tormentors was recently related in an interesting paper in one of the local publications. A jackal was, it is said, observed by an old hunter to take up some cocoa-nut fibre in his mouth and proceed to the water, where, wading in a short distance, he gradually lowered himself, until at last nothing but the very tip of his snout remained above water. After retaining this position for some time, he suddenly ducked under, leaving the cocoa-nut fibre in the water, and made for the shore. The old hunter had been watching his actions with much curiosity for some time, unable to make out what his customer was after, but quite prepared to find it was something very deep. When he had left, the man examined the piece of cocoa-nut fibre, when the object of the jackal was at once apparent. His disagreeable tenants had, as he sunk in the water, gradually wended their way towards his snout. Thence they had, poor deluded victims of misplaced confidence, taken refuge in the cocoa-nut fibre, and soon they were left to the mercy of the fickle elements, while master jackal sloped off with a clean bill of health.

As I jog along, a party of men are to be seen a short way off, with hands joined, apparently going through a country dance at this early hour of the morning; and so they are, but with a purpose and an object: they are treading out the corn. In the distance are heard the shouts and laughter of boys, bathing in the sluggish stream. The moorhen feeds by the road-side; the dove coos in the bush; the jungle-cock and double-spurred haban kukulu cry from the forest, and the snipe rises close beside us, as my horsekeeper, my horse, and I pursue our way. The Singhalese is a great bather. In this soft sleepy land, the hours of his lazy noontide are spent in standing up to his waist in some river or lake beneath the shade of overhanging trees, and pouring vessel after vessel of water over his head. He will then slowly sink down and disappear, come up after a while, and pour some more water over himself again, or else he and a companion will amuse themselves by the half-hour with standing opposite each other, and alternately splashing into one another's eyes a jet of water, struck up with the open palm of the hand.

A five minutes' halt, that my horsekeeper may have a cup of coffee, and on again. We pass a sugar estate that is abandoned all but a little patch. It was once the late Lord Elphinstone's. The buildings with the tall chimney stand out clear in the morning light. Thousands upon thousands have been sunk upon this spot that now brings forth so fine a crop of —weeds. We are in the habit of extolling those pioneers in distant lands who have shown us what *will* succeed, but do we not owe almost as great a debt of gratitude to those who have taught us what will *not* answer? How many a poor fellow who might otherwise have sunk his little all in a sugar estate has invested it in something else, warned by the losses of a more wealthy speculator. If "deeds of great men all remind us, we can make our lives sublime," the failures of rich and enterprising men may also show us how we can avoid making our career a losing one. Valuable machinery here lies idle, awaiting a use at some future time; but I have no time to look at it, and press on. The sun is getting hot. A little further and I overtake my coolies and baggage; we ford the river, and, soon after, reach the morning's halting-station, the house of a Singhalese gentleman, which has been prepared for our use. The owner makes his bow, and then, with true politeness, retires, and is seen no more until I leave. Here a welcome cup of coffee enables me to hold on till breakfast. A wash, a snooze, a story from All the Year Round, and then comes *the* meal of meals in India; that is, the late breakfast, the déjeûner à la fourchette, as distinguished from the young breakfast of coffee and toast; time of day, not far from noon; bill of fare on this occasion, spatch-cock, potatoes, cold brisket of beef, rice, three curries, and a sambal.

Another stage in the afternoon. We are on a jungle bridle-road, and the bridges are regular horse-traps. I am warned to dismount before crossing them by what happened to a predecessor on this very road. He tried to ride over one of them, about which his attendants had doubts. It broke, and he went to the bottom of the nullah; his horse hung somehow, like Mohammed, between earth and the sky, and was with much difficulty rescued. At sunset, after a hot ride, we halt for the night at another house, like the one of the morning strongly built, but in native style. Here a few chatties of water wash away the heat and dust of the day's travel, and a late dinner follows. In this climate, and at this season, a bed in the verandah is preferable to a close room, although we are at some height above the sea. Next morning we are up with the early village cock. The coolies wake up reluctantly from their slumbers, and sling their loads on a pliable stick made of the areca palm, and called a "pingo." They balance the baggage at either end, suspending it by strings, then give the stick a slightly oscillating motion, and off they go, keeping step with its swing.

We ford for the last time the river, whose banks, lined with the feathery bamboo and larger forest trees, we have hung upon hitherto, and face a mountain with an awfully steep ascent. It is off the regular track, and leads to a valley in the mountains which is anything but a "happy valley," and where I have some business to transact, whereof I shall say more hereafter. To follow a "bee line" may be very fine on the prairies, but when it is up one side of a mountain and down another, one wishes

that a little engineering knowledge had directed the path rather than the flow of the mountain torrent. I can imagine a man's descending this way in the rainy season by slipping down a cataract, but how he gets up I do not know, unless he does it like young eels and salmon. Fortunately the ascent is at present dry, and, by holding on to my horse's tail when I could not sit on his back, I managed at length to reach the summit, whence a glorious view in some degree compensated for the toil. Far away in the distance was the sea. Hill after hill stretched away towards it below, and under our feet were the rice-fields we had lately left. The descent was less precipitous. We saw where an elephant had some weeks previously rubbed his muddy sides against a rock. No hopes of seeing him in this dry weather. The land-leeches levied black mail on us as we passed through their mountain haunts, or rather red mail, as the blood on our legs testified. One had made an inroad on the back of my hand so insidiously, that he had drank his fill and dropped off again without my knowing it, leaving only a bleeding dot on the skin as a mark of his delicate attentions. Some persons suffer much irritation of the skin a few days after having been bitten by leeches. My temperament is happily of such a nature that the inconvenience is very slight. Of all my party my dog enjoys himself the most thoroughly. He is always up to something. Instead of the listless lounging inactivity of his verandah life, he is once more roaming about, erectes auribus. Ever and anon he plunges into the jungle, and whirr! whirr! go the terrified jungle-fowl close over my head.

At length I reach the shelter of a native house, and halt for the rest of the day. Why am I here? Because this little mountain glen has for some time past been the scene of very lawless doings. Certain influential villains, fancying themselves secure in their inaccessible position, have been carrying on matters with a high hand. They manifest, among other peculiarities, a strong affection for their neighbour's ox; and make many other mistakes as to the law of meum and tuum. I have been told of one cow in particular that has (without any natural selection) broken out into a crop of brand-marks, which are very different from those that its owner is said to have bestowed on it, and those marks, by a strange coincidence, correspond with the brands of a certain headman, whose duty it is to protect the interests of others. A great deal more of a similar nature has been told me, and it seems desirable to go myself "and beard the robber in his den, *Mal Hamy* in his hall." A pretty day's work I have. I have come a day sooner than I was expected, and fancy I have stolen a march on my friends. The cow in whose welfare I take such an interest bears unmistakably the evidence required, and the issue is that certain individuals are marched off to the jail. On their way, two of these worthies give their guardians the slip, and the hue and cry is raised, property ordered to be sequestered, &c. &c.

Then there is a matter of forcible abduction. A girl, the daughter of highly respectable parents, seeks protection. The father was with his family when a message came that a neighbour was ill and needed medical advice. The old man proceeds on his charitable errand, and is conducted to a woman's bedside who feigns sickness. While his patient is thus occupying his attention, a messenger is secretly despatched to his house, who informs his family in breathless haste, that in crossing a bridge the sticks gave way, that the patriarch fell upon a pointed stake which pierced his ribs, and that he lies at death's door. Out rush in frantic haste the wife, the sister-in-law, and the daughter. At a certain distance from the house the two former are knocked down, and the latter carried off by force; and, when the father comes home, he learns the sad tale. The story is, of course, strenuously denied. I have my own opinion; but fair play is a jewel. The rule that every man is assumed to be innocent till his guilt is proved, holds good in Ceylon as in every part of her Majesty's possessions. All I shall say, therefore, is, that if the story be true it was an ingenious stratagem—if false, an ingenious invention, se non vero, e' ben trovato. Meanwhile, the accused awaits trial, so no more on that head. A burglary case winds up the day's proceedings, and I feel I have done a good stroke of business.

In England, when a man is angry with another he fights him. In Ceylon, he enters a complaint against him. I have known men inflict severe wounds on themselves or one of their friends simply that they might charge an enemy with the commission of the offence. Equally cunning are the defences made against charges. I may just mention one of this very class. A man loses a buffalo calf, or says he lost it; he subsequently finds it, with fresh brand-marks, known to be the marks of the accused. To prove that it is his calf, he brings the man a buffalo, who recognises and acknowledges the calf. Here one would suppose is an unbiased and truthful witness. The lady is not on her oath, it is true, or, if cross-questioned, the proctor might find himself on the horns of a dilemma, or of a she-buffalo, which is worse. But maternal instincts can not lie. "Can't they, though?" says the accused. "I tell you they can. That buffalo is complainant's; that calf is mine. His buffalo lost her calf, my calf lost her mother. Reciprocity is the soul of trade. I lent him the calf to comfort his buffalo, and to induce her to yield milk. He said I could take her back whenever I liked. Lately the buffalo and calf were grazing near my house. I took the calf and branded it!" What's to be said after that?

A terribly rough piece of work is the next morning's journey, first through swampy rice-fields, where one's horse has to walk along narrow little ridges between the muddy plains, and then rough muddy paths up and down, with loose stones at every step. But the afternoon brings me to one of those irrigative works which have been constructed in modern times, in a land

where the ruins of gigantic structures of the same kind lie hidden in abundance far from the present haunts of men. It is a dam of masonry about fifty feet high, thrown across the channel of a river so as entirely to divert its course. The effect is, that it carries a stream that used to drown the fields on its banks into a part of the country where water is an inestimable boon. It is called the Oorebokke dam. I spent the night in this neighbourhood.

The next morning, while taking depositions in a case of cattle-stealing, in walks a friend of mine, and we meet most opportunely at this out-of-the-way place, which one European visits once, perhaps, in six months, and find our routes lie in the same direction. A good breakfast, and off we go, regardless of the sun, and ride and drive together for the rest of our way. All around us the country presented an appearance most unusual in this part of the island. The very forest was dying for want of rain; but, strange to say, amidst the surrounding arid scenery, one tract after another of the most beautiful green rice-fields lay in one continuous line along our path. To what was this owing? The answer is: To the second dam in this part of the country, called the Kirime dam, also executed about the same time as that before mentioned. The public complain that the monument which was to perpetuate the memory of Sir Henry Ward's vigorous administration has not yet been erected. But I reply, it exists in the smiling rice-fields, watered by the streams that Kirime and Oorebokke have supplied to nourish and support thousands who would otherwise now be staring grim want full in the face. On our road we crossed a bridge near a few huts. In the water beneath this bridge I saw a most unusual sight. The stream was as full as it could possibly be of very fair-sized fish, which were eagerly waiting to be fed. The moment a handful of rice was thrown into the water, there was such a commotion as I have never before seen. The fish seemed to jump on each other's backs in their efforts to secure some, and the water was all in a bubble around them. No one ever thinks of killing them: they are regarded as pets; but now and then an alligator comes that way and has a surfeit of fish.

A few more miles, and we reached the town of Tanjalle, and the jungle part of our journey was at an end.

SONNET.

The flower, full blown, now bends the stalk, now breaks,
The mellow fruit inclines the bough to earth,
The brow which thought impregnates oft-times aches,
Death-stricken is the womb in giving birth.
Cracked is the vase by heat which doth illume,
The driest logs the swiftest burn to nought,
Sweet flowers are stifled by their own perfume,
And bees, when honey-clogged, are easy caught.
Snapped are true chords e'en by the note they give,
The largest wave is broken by its weight,
Choked by its sheer sufficiency the sieve,
And blunted soon the shaft which flieth straight.
And so the largest mind and richest soul
Are always most amenable to dole.

THE BATTLE OF THE BARRELS.

The world will soon not be worth living in. Philanthropists, reformers, legislators, and social regenerators, are at work, day and night, rooting up, putting down, and sweeping away all the joys which make existence in this sublunary planet tolerable. At one time, if your donkey wouldn't go, you were at liberty to wallop him to the bare bone. You mustn't now. If you do, there is a Society down upon you. It's my belief that the present race of donkeys are aware of this; and that's what makes them so obstinate. The very cats are grown contumacious, and don't care how much row they kick up on the tiles; for they know that you mustn't take them out and flay them alive in the back yard. They belong to the Society too; so do your wife and your dog. You mustn't beat either, though it may be a pleasure to both parties. What *is* a man to beat? Upon my word, I don't know anything that is not in the Act of Parliament except the bounds of the parish, and they are a treat fit only for the workhouse.

You mustn't fight either. No; the practice of the noble art of self-defence without the gloves, is a breach of the peace. The French polishers of society forget the grand maxim: "If you wish for peace, prepare for war." How can you prepare for war if you are not allowed to practise the noble art of self-defence? You mustn't let your dog fight; though Dr. Watts, an eminent divine, who was good and wrote hymns, says, "It is his nature to." I tell you your laws are unnatural. There's nothing that game cocks like better than fighting with steel spurs on their heels. You say it is cruel. I tell you the cocks like it, revel in it. *I* like it. I revel in it. Why should you deprive me and my game cocks of our pleasure? Because you are determined to root all pleasure out of the earth, and make the world a howling wilderness. I would go out of the dull slow place altogether, but you won't even let me do that. If I throw myself over the bridge, and seek relief from the boredom of an intolerable existence in a watery grave, there is another Society at hand to run an iron hook into me, and bring me back to life and misery. It's these Societies that do all the mischief. The secretaries and officers must do something to earn their salaries. It's salaries that they're started for. I shouldn't be surprised if we were to hear next of a society for doing away with the sun. I dare say the gas companies would consider that the sun is a very improper thing, and ought to be put down.

It is surely and certainly coming to this when Parliament is actually talking of putting down the barrel-organs. Yes; the savage breast of this gloomy age is insensible even to the charms of music. What does Mr. Pope, who was a poet, say?

Descend, ye Nine! descend and sing,
The breathing instruments inspire!
Wake into voice each silent string,
And sweep the sounding lyre.

But what does Mr. Bass, who is a brewer, say? Why, he says, "Take the Nine up, and lock them in the station-house." This is the difference between an age of poetry and barrel-organs, and an age of bitter ale and beer-barrels.

I am fond of music myself, and I am a friend of liberty and oppressed and picturesque peoples. When I picture those poor but honest Savoyards, countrymen of Alfieri and Dante, leaving the sunny plains of fair Italy, bidding farewell to the fruitful fig-tree and the clustering vine, forsaking country, home, and friends, to go forth as missionaries of the divine art of music to the cold and inhospitable shores of the sunless north—when I call up this vision of heroic devotion in my mind's eye, and see Guiseppe and Giovanni scaling the Alpine heights in very indifferent shoes, but with fervour in their eyes and "Excelsior" on their banners, I am moved to the deepest sympathy and admiration. Welcome Guiseppe, welcome Giovanni! Welcome to England and Saffron-hill! He who does not love the organ-man has no bowels for humanity, no taste for music, no soul for poetry. The man himself is a man and a brother; and as to his instrument, what sings the poet, the same who bade the Nine descend?

When the full organ joins the tuneful quire,
Th' immortal pow'rs incline their ear,
Borne on the swelling notes our souls aspire,
While solemn airs improve the sacred fire,
And angels lean from Heaven to hear.

Yet there *are* people in the world who would put down the organs, who would hand over the discoursers of sweet music to the tender mercies of rude and ruthless policemen, fellows with souls for nothing but cook-maids, and tastes for nothing but cold mutton. In view of the immortal powers inclining their ears, and the angels leaning out of the windows of Heaven to hear, I can only say,

The gods have pity where mankind have none.

If you are going to put down everything, and do away with everything in this way, I want to know what a gentleman of independent property like myself is to do? How am I to be amused during the long hours of the day when there is nothing doing in the Haymarket? As I said before, you have left me nothing to be at; you won't let me aid and abet a fight; you forbid me to match my dog or my game cocks; and now you are going to deprive me of my barrel-organ, that sweet box of tunes, which comes, as I lie on the sofa smoking my cigar, to soothe me with Il Balen, and The Young Man from the Country, and the Dark Girl dressed in Blue. Oh, how I love that dark girl dressed in blue! I have never seen her, but music has painted all her charms, and I know that she is a smart young girl, a tall young girl, a nice young girl, and a dark young girl. All this in a flowing blue skirt. What a picture! It ravishes my soul! I send out a shilling to poor Giovanni, and bid him play it over again and again.

There are two lady patronesses of Giovanni's a few doors down on the other side of the way. Charming girls they are, with pink cheeks and frizzy hair, and nearly always sitting out in the balcony in low dresses. I fancy they are orphans, poor things, for I never see any one at the window who looks like a parent. They are passionately fond of music, and keep the organ-men playing to them for hours, and always pay them well; for I am happy to say that, though orphans, they appear to be well off, and go out in a brougham. There is another ardent lover of music at number one, an old gentleman who had a fortune left him on condition that he drove out every day in a coach-and-four. He has an organ to play to him at all his meals, and when the painter fellow, at number two, runs out with a maulstick in his hand to drive the musician away, the old gentleman has him into the garden, and makes him play there. There is another cantankerous man near me, who is always rushing out at the poor fellows and setting the police upon them. I don't know who he is; but he sits at a window all day long writing, and appears to work for his living. A pretty thing! if independent persons like myself, and the old gentleman, and the two pretty ladies, are to be deprived of our pleasure to suit the whims and fancies of mere workpeople. The conceit of the fellows who "study," as they call it, is perfectly ridiculous. They think that the world cannot go on without them; that what *they* do is everything, and that everybody else ought to be hushed down and silenced. Just listen to Mr. Babbage, who calls himself a philosopher:* "During the last ten years the amount of street music has so greatly increased, that it is now become a positive nuisance to a very considerable portion of the inhabitants of London. It robs the industrious man of his time; it annoys the musical man by its intolerable badness; it irritates the invalid, deprives the patient, who at great inconvenience has visited London for the best medical advice, of that repose which, under such circumstances, is essential to his recovery, and it destroys the time and the energies of all the intellectual classes of society by its continual interruptions of their pursuits." This is rather a sweeping charge; let us see how he proves it. The instruments of torture—torture, indeed!—permitted by the government to be in daily and nightly use in the streets of London are thus enumerated: organs, brass bands, fiddles, harps, harpsichords, hurdy-gurdies, flageolets, drums, bagpipes—the delightful soul-inspiring bagpipes!—accordions, halfpenny whistles, tom-toms, trumpets, and the human voice divine, shouting out objects for sale, and in religious canting, and psalm-singing. The encouragers of street music are tavern-keepers, public-houses,

* A Chapter on Street Nuisances, by Charles Babbage, Esq.

gin-shops, beer-shops, coffee-shops, servants, children, visitors from the country, ladies of doubtful virtue, and occasionally titled ladies; but these are almost invariably of recent elevation, and deficient in that taste which their sex usually possess. And what does Mr. Bass say to this? "The habit of frequenting public-houses and the amount of intoxication is much augmented by these means. It therefore finds support from the whole body of licensed victuallers, and from all those who are interested as the proprietors of public-houses."

Considering that Mr. Babbage is a commander of the Italian order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus, one might expect him to have some charity for the poor organ-grinder who comes from the same country as his decoration; but he has none. He is proud of the order of the dead beggar; but he has no bowels of compassion for the living one. His path is beset by him go where he will. On one occasion he fled from his tormentors to Cornwall, and there, within a few miles of the Land's End, he met one of the fellows whom he had frequently sent away from his own street. Some of Mr. Babbage's neighbours have derived great pleasure from inviting musicians of various tastes and countries to play opposite his house, with the view of ascertaining whether there are not some kinds of instruments which he might approve; but their best efforts have had no other effect than to bring the philosopher out into the street in search of a policeman. What a misfortune it is to a man to have no taste for music! There goes Mr. Babbage in search of an officer of the law followed by a crowd of young children, urged on by their parents and backed at a judicious distance by a set of vagabonds shouting forth uncomplimentary epithets, and making ridiculous rhymes on his name. When he turns round to survey his illustrious tail, it stops; if he moves towards it, it recedes; but, the instant he turns, the shouting and the abuse are resumed. In one case there were above a hundred persons, consisting of men, women, and boys, who followed him through the streets before he could find a policeman. One day two fellows called "Stop thief!" after him, and then ran away. A foolish young fellow purchased a wind instrument with a hole in it, with which he made discordant noises for the purpose of annoying him. A workman inhabiting an attic which overlooked his garden, blew a penny whistle out of his window every day for half an hour. When Mr. Babbage took measures to put a stop to these proceedings he was threatened with vengeance. One correspondent kindly volunteered to do him a serious bodily injury, while a third, in a personal communication, intimated his intention of burning the house down with Mr. Babbage in it. The smaller evils of dead cats thrown down his area, of windows from time to time purposely broken, or of occasional blows on the head from stones projected by unseen hands, Mr. Babbage will not condescend to speak. All these things are trifles compared to being awakened at one o'clock in the morning (just as he has fallen asleep after a painful surgical operation) by the crash of a brass band. On a careful retrospect of the last dozen years of his life, Mr. Babbage arrives at the conclusion that one-fourth part of his working power has been destroyed by street music—which he regards as a twenty-five per cent income-tax on his brain, levied by permission of the government, and squandered among the most worthless classes. During eighty days he registered one hundred and sixty-five instances when he went out to put a stop to the nuisance. In several of these instances his whole day's work was lost, for they frequently occurred when he was giving instructions to his workmen relative to some parts of his analytical engine.

This is the case of the workers. Let us now hear what Mr. Babbage has to say on behalf of the invalids. It has been found by the returns of benefit societies that in London 4·72 persons in every hundred are constantly ill, which is equal to forty-seven in every thousand. In Mr. Babbage's district the number of persons in a house averages ten. In Manchester-street, which faces his own residence, there are fifty-six houses. This, allowing the average stated, shows that about twenty-six persons are usually ill in that one street; but there are streets adjoining, to portions of which the music penetrates, so that if the portions of these streets are considered to be only equal in population to that of Manchester-street, we have upwards of fifty sick people, who are constantly disturbed by music.

These people, then, these slavish workers and obstinate invalids, claim protection. They demand that employment and ill-health shall be just and reasonable causes for forcing street musicians, not simply to move on, but to clear out of the neighbourhood altogether. They ask that the police, on any complaint whatever from an inhabitant, shall have no discretion, but shall be obliged to take the musician into custody and lock him up. This is all very well for the workers and the invalids, but what is to become of me, a gentleman of good health and independent property, who has no occasion to work, and who only wants to be amused? What is to become of the old gentleman at number one who likes music at his dinner, when he comes from a drive in his coach-and-four? What is to become of the two young ladies with pink cheeks and frizzy hair? Labour has its duties no doubt; but property has its rights. What is Mr. Babbage's calculating machine to me? I have five hundred a year independent of the world, and when I go to the bank to receive my dividends, I can count the notes without a machine. The machine I require is an organ to play to me when I am dull, and want to kill time. What's the use of being independent if you can't enjoy yourself? One might just as well have to work.

Mr. Bass, too, to head the crusade! It is just one barrel against another. But take heart, my poor, persecuted, ill-used, unappreciated Italians, Mr. Gladstone is going to give us universal suffrage. You will have votes, you will return

members to Parliament, you will bring in a bill to put down beer-barrels, and you will have your revenge.

A RENT IN A CLOUD.

In Twenty-four Chapters.

CHAPTER XXI. THE RETURN.

When Calvert found himself alone in the drawing-room, he felt as if he had never been away. Everything was so exactly as he left it. There was the sofa drawn close to the window of the flower-garden where Florence used to recline; there the little work-table with the tall glass that held her hyacinths, the flowers she was so fond of; there the rug for her terrier to lie on. Yonder, under the fig-tree, hung the cage with her favourite canary; and here were the very books she used to read long ago —Petrarch and Tennyson and Uhland. There was a flower to mark a place in the volume of Uhland, and it was at a little poem they had once read together. How full of memories are these old rooms, where we have dreamed away some weeks of life, if not in love, in something akin to it, and thus more alive to the influences of externals than if further gone in the passion! There was not a spot, not a chair, nor a window-seat that did not remind Calvert of some incident of the past. He missed his favourite song, "A place in thy memory, dearest," from the piano, and he sought for it and put it back where it used to be; he then went over to her table to arrange the books as they were wont to be long ago, and came suddenly upon a small morocco case. He opened it. It was a miniature of Loyd, the man he hated the most on earth. It was an ill-done portrait, and gave an affected thoughtfulness and elevation to his calm features which imparted insufferable pretension to them: Calvert held out the picture at arm's length, and laughed scornfully as he looked at it. He had but time to lay it down on the table when Emily entered the room. She approached him hurriedly, and with an agitated manner. "Oh, Colonel Calvert——" she began.

"Why not Harry, brother Harry, as I used to be, Milly dearest," said he, as he caught her hand in both his own. "What has happened to forfeit for me my old place in your esteem?"

"Nothing, nothing, but all is so changed; you have grown to be such a great man, and we have become lost to all that goes on in the world."

"And where is your sister, will she not come to see me?"

"You startled her, you gave her such a shock, when you stood up in the boat and returned her salute, that she was quite overcome, and has gone to her room. Aunt Grainger is with her, and told me to say—that is, she hoped, if you would not take it ill, or deem it unkind——"

"Go on, dearest; nothing that comes from your lips can possibly seem unkind; go on."

"But I cannot go on," she cried, and burst into tears and covered her face with her hands.

"I never thought—so little forethought has selfishness — that I was to bring sorrow and trouble under this roof. Go back, and tell your aunt that I hope she will favour me with five minutes of her company; that I see, what I greatly blame myself for not seeing before, how full of sad memories my presence here must prove. Go, darling, say this, and bid me good-by before you go."

"Oh, Harry, do not say this. I see you are angry with us. I see you think us all unkind; but it was the suddenness of your coming; and Florence has grown so nervous of late, so disposed to give way to all manner of fancies."

"She imagines, in fact," said he, haughtily, "that I have come back to persecute her with attentions which she has already rejected. Isn't that so?"

"No. I don't think—I mean Florence could never think that when you knew of her engagement—knew that within a few months at furthest——"

"Pardon me, if I stop you. Tell your sister from me that she has nothing to apprehend from any pretensions of mine. I can see that you think me changed, Milly; grown very old and very worn. Well, go back, and tell her that the inward change is far greater than the outward one. Mad Harry has become as tame and quiet and common-place as that gentleman in the morocco case yonder; and if she will condescend to see me, she may satisfy herself that neither of us in future need be deemed dangerous to the other."

There was an insolent pride in the manner of his delivery of these words that made Emily's cheek burn as she listened, and all that her aunt had often told her of "Calvert insolence" now came fully to her mind.

"I will go and speak to my aunt," she said, at last.

"Do so," said he, carelessly, as he threw himself into a chair, and took up the book that lay nearest to him. He had not turned over many pages—he had read none—when Miss Grainger entered. She was flushed and flurried in manner; but tried to conceal it.

"We are giving you a very strange welcome, Colonel—Mr. Calvert; but you know us all of old, and you know that dear Florry is so easily agitated and overcome. She is better now, and if you will come up-stairs to the little drawing-room, she'll see you."

"I am all gratitude," said he, with a low bow; "but I think it is, perhaps, better not to inconvenience her. A visit of constraint would be, to me at least, very painful. I'd rather leave the old memories of my happiness here undashed by such a shadow. Go back, therefore, and say that I think I understand the reason of her reserve; that I am sincerely grateful for the thoughtful kindness she has been minded to observe towards me. You need not add," said he, with a faint smile, "that the consideration in the present case was unnecessary. I am not so impressionable as I used to be; but assure her that I am very sorry for it, and that Colonel

Calvert, with all his successes, is not half so happy a fellow as mad Harry used to be without a guinea."

"But you'll not leave us? You'll stay here to-night?"

"Pray excuse me. One of my objects—my chief one—in coming over here, was to ask your nieces' acceptance of some trinkets I had brought for them. Perhaps this would not be a happy moment to ask a favour at their hands, so pray keep them over and make birthday presents of them in my name. This is for Florence—this, I hope Emily will not refuse."

"But do not go. I entreat you not to go. I feel so certain that if you stay we shall all be so happy together. There is so much, besides, to talk over; and as to those beautiful things, for I know they must be beautiful——"

"They are curious in their way," said he, carelessly opening the clasp of one of the cases, and displaying before her amazed eyes a necklace of pearls and brilliants that a queen might wear.

"Oh, Colonel Calvert, it would be impossible for my niece to accept such a costly gift as this. I never beheld anything so splendid in my life."

"These ear-drops," he continued, "are considered fine. They were said to belong to one of the wives of the King of Delhi, and were reputed the largest pearls in India."

"The girls must see them; though I protest and declare beforehand nothing on earth should induce us to accept them."

"Let them look well at them, then," said he, "for when you place them in my hands again, none shall ever behold them after."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I'll throw them into the lake yonder. A rejected gift is too odious a memory to be clogged with."

"You couldn't be guilty of such rash folly?"

"Don't you know well that I could? Is it to-day or yesterday that the Calvert nature is known to you? If you wish me to swear it, I will do so; and, what is more, I will make you stand by and see the water close over them."

"Oh, you are not changed—not in the least changed," she cried, in a voice of real emotion.

"Only in some things, perhaps," said he, carelessly. "By the way, this is a miniature of me—was taken in India. It is a locket on this side. Ask Emily to wear it, occasionally, for my sake."

"How like; and what a splendid costume!"

"That was my dress in full state; but I prefer my service uniform, and think it became me better."

"Nothing could become you better than this," said she, admiringly; and truly there was good warrant for the admiration; "but even this is covered with diamonds!"

"Only a circlet and my initials. It is of small value. These are the baubles. Do what you will with them; and now good-by. Tanti saluti, as we used to say long ago to the ladies—Tanti saluti de la parte mia. Tell Milly she is very naughty not to have given me her hand to kiss before we parted; but if she will condescend to wear this locket, now and then, I'll forgive her. Good-by."

And, before Miss Grainger could reply, he had opened the window and was gone.

When Calvert reached the jetty the boatman was not there; but the boat, with her oars, lay close to the steps; the chain that attached her to an iron ring was, however, padlocked, and Calvert turned impatiently back to seek the man. After he had gone, however, a few paces, he seemed to change his mind, and turned once more towards the lake. Taking up a heavy stone, he proceeded to smash the lock on the chain. It was stronger than he looked for, and occupied some minutes; but he succeeded at last. Just as he threw into the boat the loose end of the broken chain, he heard steps behind him; he turned; it was Emily running towards him at full speed. "Oh Harry, dear Harry!" she cried, "don't go, don't leave us; Florence is quite well again, and as far as strength will let her, trying to come and meet you. See, yonder she is, leaning on aunt's arm." True enough, at some hundred yards off, the young girl was seen slowly dragging her limbs forward in the direction where they stood.

"I have come some thousand leagues to see *her*," said he, sternly, "through greater fatigues, and, perhaps, as many perils as she is encountering."

"Go to her—go towards her," cried Emily, reproachfully.

"Not one step; not the breadth of a hair, Milly," said he. "There is a limit to the indignity a woman may put upon a man, and your sister has passed it. If she likes to come and say farewell to me here, be it so; if not, I must go without it."

"Then I can tell you one thing, Colonel Calvert, if my sister Florence only knew of the words you have just spoken, she'd not move one other step towards you, if, if——"

"If it were to save my life, you would say. *That* is not so unreasonable," said he, with a saucy laugh.

"Here is Florence come, weak and tottering as she is, to ask you to stay with us. You'll not have the heart to say No to her," said Miss Grainger.

"I don't think we—any of us—know much about Mr. Calvert's heart, or what it would prompt him to do," said Emily, half indignantly, as she turned away. And fortunate it was she did turn away, since, had she met the fierce look of Calvert's eyes at the moment, it would have chilled her very blood with fear.

"But you'll not refuse me," said Florence, laying her hand on his arm. "You know well how seldom I ask favours, and how unused I am to be denied when I do ask."

"I was always your slave—I ask nothing better than to be so still," he whispered in her ear.

"And you will stay?"

"Yes, till you bid me go," he whispered again;

"but remember, too, that when I ask a favour I can just as little brook refusal."

"We'll talk of that another time. Give me your arm now, and help me back to the house, for I feel very weak and faint. Is Milly angry with you?" she asked, as they walked along, side by side.

"I don't know; perhaps so," said he, carelessly.

"You used to be such good friends. I hope you have not fallen out?"

"I hope not," said he, in his former easy tone; "or that if we have, we may make it up again. Bear in mind, Florence," added he, with more gravity of manner, "that I am a good deal changed from what you knew me. I have less pride, cherish fewer resentments, scarcely any hopes, and no affections—I mean, strong affections. The heart you refused is now cold; the only sentiment left me, is a sense of gratitude. I can be very grateful; I am already so." She made no answer to this speech, and they re-entered the house in silence.

CHAPTER XXII. A LETTER OF CONFESSIONS.

THE following letter from Calvert to Drayton was written about three weeks after the events of our last chapter:

"The Villa.

"My dear Algernon,—I knew my black fellow would run you to earth, though he had not a word of English in his vocabulary, nor any clue to you, except your name and a map of England. It must have, however, been his near kinsman—the other 'black gentleman'—suggested Scarborough to him; and, to this hour, I cannot conceive how he found you. I am overjoyed to hear that you could muster enough Hindostanee to talk with him, and hear some of those adventures which my natural modesty might have scrupled to tell you. It would seem, from your note, that he has been candour itself, and confessed much that a man of a paler and thinner skin might prefer to have shrouded or evaded. All true, D.; we have done our brigandage on a grand scale, and divided our prize-money without the aid of a prize-court. Keep those trinkets with an easy conscience, and, if they leave your own hands for any less worthy still, remember the adage, 'Ill got, ill gone,' and be comforted. I suppose you are right—you are generally right on a question of worldly craft and prudence—it is better not to attempt the sale of the larger gems in England. St. Petersburg and Vienna are as good markets, and safer.

"El. J. has already told you of our escape into Cashmere; make him narrate the capture of Mansergh, and how we found the Keyserbagh necklace under his saddle. A Queen's officer looting! Only think of the enormity! Did it not justify those proceedings in which Instinct anticipated the finding of a court-martial? The East and its adventures—a very bulky roll, I assure you—must wait till we meet; and in my next I shall say where, and how, and when; for there is much that I shall tell that I could not write even to you, Algernon. Respect my delicacy, and be patient.

"I know you are impatient to hear why I am not nearer England—even at Paris—and I am just as impatient to tell you. The address of this will show you where I am. All the writing in the world could not tell you why. No, Drayton; I lie awake at night, questioning, questioning, and in vain. I have gone to the nicest anatomy of my motives, dissecting fibre by fibre, and may I be—a Queen's officer—if I can hit upon an explanation of the mystery. The nearest I can come is, that I feel the place dangerous to me, and, therefore, I cling to it. I know well the feeling that would draw a man back to the spot where he had committed a great crime. Blood is a very glutinous fluid, and has most cohesive properties; but here, in this place, I have done no enormities, and why I hug this coast, except that it be a lee-shore, where shipwreck is very possible, I really cannot make out. Not a bit in love? No, Algy. It is not easy for a man like me to fall in love. Love demands a variety of qualities, which have long left me, if I ever had them. I have little trustfulness, no credulity; I very seldom look back, never look forward; I neither believe in another, nor ask belief in myself. I have seen too much of life to be a dreamer—reality with me denies all place to mere romance. Last of all, I cannot argue from the existence of certain qualities in a woman to the certainty of her possessing fifty others that I wish her to have. I only believe what I see, and my moral eyes are affected with cataract; and yet, with all this, there's a girl here—the same, ay, the same, I told you of long ago—that I'd rather marry than I'd be King of Agra, with a British governor-general for my water-carrier! The most maddening of all jealousy is for a woman that one is not in love with! I am not mad, most noble Drayton, though I am occasionally as near it as is safe for the surrounders. With the same determination that this girl says she'll not have me, have I sworn to myself she shall be mine. It is a fair open game, and I leave *you*, who love a wager, to name the winner. I have seen many prettier women—scores of cleverer ones. I am not quite sure that in the matter of those social captivations into which manner enters, she has any especial gifts. She is not a horsewoman, in the real sense of the word, which, once on a time, was a sine quâ non of mine; nor, in fact, has she a peculiar excellence in anything, and yet she gives you the impression of being able to be anything she likes. She has great quickness and great adaptiveness, but she possesses one trait of attraction above all: she utterly rejects *me*, and sets all my arts at defiance. I saw, very soon after I came back here, that she was prepared for a regular siege, and expected a fierce love-suit on my part. I accordingly spiked my heavy artillery, and assumed an attitude of peace-like indolence. I lounged about, chiefly alone; neither avoided nor sought her, and, if I did nothing more, I sorely puzzled her as to what I could mean by my conduct. This was so far a success that it excited her interest, and I saw that she watched and was studying

me. She even made faint attempts at little confidences: 'Saw I was unhappy—had something on my mind;' and, for the matter of that, I had plenty—plenty on my conscience, too, if nature had been cruel enough to have inflicted me with one. I, of course, said 'No,' to all these insinuations. I was not happy nor unhappy. If I sat at the table of life, and did not eat, it was because I had no great appetite. The entertainment did not amuse me much, but I had nowhere particularly to go to. She went one day so far as to hint whether I was not crossed in love? But I assured her not, and I saw her grow very pale as I said it. I even suggested, that though one might have two attacks of the malady, like the measles, the second one was always mild, and never hurt the constitution. Having thus piqued her a little about myself, I gradually unsettled her opinion on other things, frightened her by how the geologists contradict Genesis, and gave her to choose between Monsieur Cuvier and Moses. As for India, I made her believe that we were all heartily ashamed of what we were doing there, spoke of the Hindoo as the model native, and said that if the story of our atrocities were written, Europe would rise up and exterminate us. Hence I had not taken the C.B., nor the V.C., nor any other alphabetical glories. In a word, Drayton, I got her into that frame of restlessness and fever in which all belief smacks of foolish credulity, and the commonest exercise of trust seems like the indulgence of a superstition.

"All this time no mention of Loyd, not a hint of his existence. Yesterday, however, came a fellow here, a certain Mr. Stockwell, with a note of introduction from Loyd, calling him 'my intimate friend S., whom you have doubtless heard of as a most successful photographer. He is going to India with a commission from the Queen,' &c. We had him to dinner, and made him talk, as all such fellows are ready to talk, about themselves and the fine people who employ them. In the evening we had his portfolio and the peerage, and so delighted was the vulgar dog to have got into the land of coronets and strawberry-leaves, that he would have ignored Loyd if I had not artfully brought him to his recollection; but he came to the memory of 'poor Joe,' as he called him, with such a compassionating pity, that I actually grew to like him. He had been at the vicarage, too, and saw its little homely ways and small economies; and I laughed so heartily at his stupid descriptions and vapid jokes, that I made the ass think he was witty, and actually repeat them. All this time imagine Florry, pale as a corpse, or scarlet, either half fainting or in a fever, dying to burst in with an angry indignation, and yet restrained by maiden bashfulness. She could bear no more by eleven o'clock, and went off to bed under pretence of a racking headache.

"It is a great blow at any man's favour in a woman's esteem when you show up his particular friend, his near intimate; and certes, I did not spare Stockwell. You have seen me in this part, and you can give me credit for some powers in playing it.

"'Could that creature ever have been the dear friend of Joseph?' said Milly, as he said good night.

"'Why not?' I asked. 'They seem made for each other.'

"Florry was to have come out for a sail this morning with me, but she is not well—I suspect sulky—and has not appeared. I therefore give you the morning that I meant for her. Her excuses have amazed me; because, after my last night's success, and the sorry figure I had succeeded in presenting L. to her, I half hoped my own chances might be looking up. In fact, though I have been playing a waiting game so patiently, to all appearance, I am driven half mad by self-restraint. Come what may, I must end this; besides, to-day is the fourth, on the tenth the steamer from Alexandria will touch at Malta; L. will therefore be at Leghorn by the fourteenth, and here two days after—that is to say, in twelve days more my siege must be raised. If I were heavily ironed in a felon's cell with the day of my execution fixed, I could not look to the time with one-half the heart-sinking I now feel.

"I'd give—what would I not give?—to have you near me, though in my soul I know all that you'd say; how you'd preach never minding, letting be, and the rest of it, just as if I could cut out some other work for myself to-morrow, and think no more of her. But I cannot. No, Drayton, I cannot. Is it not too hard for the fellow who cut his way through Lahore with sixteen followers, and made a lane through her Majesty's light cavalry, to be worsted, defeated, and disgraced by a young girl, who has neither rank, riches, nor any remarkable beauty to her share, but is simply sustained by the resolve that she'll not have me! Mind, D., I have given her no opportunity of saying this since I came last here: on the contrary, she would, if questioned, be ready—I'd swear to it she would—to say, 'Calvert paid me no attentions, nor made any court to me.' She is very truthful in everything, but who is to say what her woman's instinct may not have revealed to her of my love? Has not the woman a man loves always a private key to his heart, and doesn't she go and tumble its contents about, just out of curiosity, ten times a day? Not that she'd ever find a great deal either in or on mine. Neither the indictments for murder or manslaughter, nor that other heavier charge for H. T., have left their traces within my pericardium, and I could stand to back myself not to rave in a compromising fashion if I had a fever to-morrow. But how hollow all this boasting, when that girl within the closed window-shutter yonder defies me—ay, defies me! Is she to go off to her wedding with the inner consciousness of this victory? There's the thought that is driving me mad, and will, I am certain, end by producing some dire mischief—what the doctors call a lesion—in this unhappy brain of mine.

And now, as I sit here in listless idleness, that other fellow is hastening across Egypt, or ploughing his way through the Red Sea, to come and marry her! I ask you, D., what amount of philosophy is required to bear up under this?

"I conclude I shall leave this some time next week—not to come near England, though—for I foresee that it will soon be out where, how, and with whom I have been spending my holidays. Fifty fellows must suspect, and some half-dozen must know all about it. America, I take it, must be my ground—as well there as anywhere else—but I can't endure a plan, so enough of this. Don't write to me till you hear again, for I shall leave this certainly, though where for, not so certain.

"What a deal of trouble and uncertainty that girl might spare me if she'd only consent to say 'Yes.' If I see her alone this evening, I half think I shall ask her.

"Farewell for a while, and believe me,

"Yours ever,

"HARRY C.

"P.S. Nine o'clock, evening. Came down to dinner looking exceedingly pretty, and dressed to perfection. All spite and malice, I'm certain. Asked me to take her out to sail to-morrow. We are to go off on an exploring expedition to an island—'que sais je?'

"The old Grainger looks on me with aunt-like eyes. She has seen a bracelet of carbuncles in dull gold, the like of which Loyd could not give her were he to sell justice for twenty years to come. I have hinted that I mean them for my mother-in-law whenever I marry, and she understands that the parentage admits of a representative. All this is very ignoble on my part; but if I knew of anything meaner that would ensure me success, I'd do it also.

"What a stunning vendetta on this girl, if she were at last to consent, to find out whom she had married, and *what*. Think of the winter nights' tales, of the charges that hang over me, and their penalties. Imagine the Hue and Cry as light reading for the honeymoon!"

He added one line on the envelope, to say he would write again on the morrow; but this promise he did not keep.

CHAPTER XXIII. A STORM.

THE boat excursion mentioned in Calvert's letter was not the only pleasure-project of that day. It was settled that Mr. Stockwell should come out and give Milly a lesson in photography, in which, under Loyd's former guidance, she had already made some progress. He was also to give Miss Grainger some flower-seeds of a very rare kind, of which he was carrying a store to the Pasha of Egypt, and which required some peculiar skill in the sowing. They were to dine, too, at a little rustic house beside the lake; and, in fact, the day was to be one of festivity and enjoyment.

The morning broke splendidly; and though a few clouds lingered about the Alpine valleys, the sky over the lake was cloudless, and the water was streaked and marbled with those parti-coloured lines which Italian lakes wear in the hot days of midsummer. It was one of those autumnal mornings in which the mellow colouring of the mature season blends with the soft air and gentle breath of spring, and all the features of landscape are displayed in their fullest beauty. Calvert and Florence were to visit the Isola de San Giulio, and bring back great clusters of the flowers of the "San Guiseppe" trees, to deck the dinner-table. They were also to go on as far as Pella for ice or snow, to cool their wine, the voyage being, as Calvert said, a blending of the picturesque with the profitable.

Before breakfast was over the sky grew slightly overcast, and a large mass of dark cloud stood motionless over the summit of Monterone.

"What will the weather do, Carlo?" asked Calvert of the old boatman of the villa, as he came to say that all was in readiness.

"Who knows, 'cellenza?" said he, with a native shrug of the shoulders. "Monterone is a big traitor of a mountain, and there's no believing him. If that cloud scatters, the day will be fine; if the wind brings down fresh clouds from the Alps, it will come on a 'burrasca.'"

"Always a burrasca; how I am sick of your burrasca," said he, contemptuously. "If you were only once in your life to see a real storm, how you'd despise those petty jobbles, in which rain and sleet play the loudest part."

"What does he say of the weather?" asked Florence, who saw that Calvert had walked on to a little point with the old man, to take a freer view of the lake.

"He says, that if it neither blows hard nor rains, it will probably be fine. Just what he has told us every day since I came here."

"What about this fine trout that you spoke of, Carlo?"

"It is at Gozzano, 'cellenza; we can take it as we go by."

"But we are going exactly in the opposite direction, my worthy friend; we are going to the island, and to Pella."

"That is different," said the old man, with another shrug of the shoulders.

"Didn't you hear thunder? I'm sure I did," cried Miss Grainger.

"Up yonder it's always growling," said Calvert, pointing towards the Simplon. "It is the first welcome travellers get when they pass the summit."

"Have you spoken to him, Milly, about Mr. Stockwell? Will he take him up at Orta, and land him here?" asked Miss Grainger, in a whisper.

"No, aunt; he hates Stockwell, he says. Carlo can take the blue boat and fetch him. They don't want Carlo, it seems."

"And are you going without a boatman, Florry?" asked her aunt.

"Of course we are. Two are quite cargo enough in that small skiff, and I trust I am as skilful a pilot as any Ortese fisherman," broke in Calvert.

"Oh, I never disputed your skill, Mr. Calvert."

"What, then, do you scruple to confide your niece to me?" said he, with a low whisper, in which the tone was more of menace than mere inquiry. "Is this the first time we have ever gone out in a boat together?"

She muttered some assurance of her trustfulness, but so confusedly, and with such embarrassment, as to be scarcely intelligible. "There! that was certainly thunder!" she cried.

"There are not three days in three months in this place without thunder. It is the Italian privilege, I take it, to make always more noise than mischief."

"But will you go if it threatens so much?" said Miss Grainger.

"Ask Florry. For *my* part, I think the day will be a glorious one."

"I'm certain it will," said Florence, gaily; "and I quite agree with what Harry said last night. Disputing about the weather has the same effect as firing great guns: it always brings down the rain."

Calvert smiled graciously at hearing himself quoted. It was the one sort of flattery he liked the best, and it rallied him out of his dark humour. "Are you ready?"—he had almost added "dearest," and only caught himself in time—perhaps, indeed, not completely in time—for she blushed, as she said, "Eccomi."

The sisters affectionately embraced each other. Emily even ran after Florence to kiss her once again, after parting, and then Florry took Calvert's arm, and hastened away to the jetty. "I declare," said she, as she stepped into the boat, "this leave-taking habit, when one is going out to ride, or to row, or to walk for an hour, is about the stupidest thing I know of."

"I always said so. It's like making one's will every day before going down to dinner. It is quite true you may chance to die before the dessert, but the mere possibility should not interfere with your asking for soup. No, no, Florry, you are to steer; the tiller is yours for to-day; my post is here;" and he stretched himself at the bottom of the boat, and took out his cigar. The light breeze was just enough to move the little lateen sail, and gradually it filled out, and the skiff stole quietly away from shore, without even a ripple on the water.

"What's the line, Florry? 'Hope at the helm, pleasure at the prow,' or is it love at the helm?"

"A bad steersman, I should say; far too capricious," cried she, laughing.

"I don't know. I think he has one wonderful attribute; he has got wings to fly away with whenever the boat is in danger, and I believe it is pretty much what love does always."

"Can't say," said she, carelessly. "Isn't that a net yonder? Oughtn't we to steer clear of it?"

"Yes. Let her fall off—so—that's enough. What a nice light hand you have."

"On a horse, they tell me, my hand is very light."

"How I'd like to see you on my Arab 'Said.' Such a creature! so large-eyed, and with such a full nostril, the face so concave in front, the true Arab type, and the jaw a complete semicircle. How proud he'd look under you, with that haughty snort he gives, as he bends his knee. He was the present of a great Rajah to me—one of those native fellows we are graciously pleased to call rebels, because they don't fancy to be slaves. Two years ago he owned a territory about the size of half Spain, and he is now something like a brigand chief, with a few hundred followers."

"Dear Harry, do not talk of India—at least not of the mutiny."

"Mutiny! Why call it mutiny, Florry? Well, love, I have done," he muttered, for the word escaped him, and he feared how she might resent it.

"Come back to my lightness of hand."

"Or of heart, for I sorely suspect, Florence, the quality is not merely a manual one."

"Am I steering well?"

"Perfectly. Would that I could sail on and on for ever thus:

> Over an ocean just like this,
> A life of such untroubled bliss."

Calvert threw in a sentimental glance with this quotation.

"In other words, an existence of nothing to do," said she, laughing, "with an excellent cigar to beguile it."

"Well, but 'ladye faire,' remember that I have earned some repose. I have not been altogether a carpet knight. I have had my share of lance and spear, and amongst fellows who handle their weapons neatly.

"You are dying to get back to Ghoorkas and Sikhs; but I won't have it. I'd rather hear Metastasio or Petrarch, just now."

"What if I were to quote something apposite, though it were only prose—something out of the Promessi Sposi?"

She made no answer, and turned away her head.

"Put up your helm a little: let the sails draw freely. This is very enjoyable; it is a right royal luxury. I'm not sure Antony ever had his galley steered by Cleopatra; had he?"

"I don't know; but I do know that I am not Cleopatra nor you Antony."

"How readily you take one up for a foolish speech, as if these rambling indiscretions were not the soul of such converse as ours. They are like the squalls, that only serve to increase our speed and never risk our safety, and, somehow, I feel to-day as if my temper was all of that fitful and capricious kind. I suppose it is over-happiness. Are you happy, Florry?" asked he, after a pause.

"If you mean, do I enjoy this glorious day and our sail, yes, intensely. Now, what am I to do? The sail is flapping in spite of me."

"Because the wind has chopped round, and is coming from the eastward. Down your helm, and let her find her own way. We have the

noble privilege of not caring whither. How she spins through it now."

"It is immensely exciting," said she, and her colour heightened as she spoke.

"Have you superstitions about dates?" he asked, after another pause.

"No; I don't think so. My life has been so uneventful. Few days record anything memorable. But why did you ask?"

"I am—I am a devout believer in lucky and unlucky days, and had I only bethought me this was a Friday, I'd have put off our sail till to-morrow."

"It is strange to see a man like you attach importance to these things."

"And yet it is exactly men like me who do so. Superstitions belong to hardy, stern, rugged races, like the northmen, even more than the natives of southern climes. Too haughty and too self-dependent to ask counsel from others like themselves, they seek advice in the occult signs and faint whispers of the natural world. Would you believe it, that I cast a horoscope last night to know if I should succeed in the next project I undertook?"

"And what was the answer?"

"An enigma to this purpose: that if what I undertook corresponded with the entrance of Orion into the seventh house——Why are you laughing?"

"Is it not too absurd to hear such nonsense from you?"

"Was it not the grotesque homage of the witch made Macbeth a murderer? What are you doing, child? Luff—luff up; the wind is freshening."

"I begin to think there should be a more skilful hand on the tiller. It blows freshly now."

"In three days more, Florence," said he, gravely, "it will be exactly two years since we sailed here all alone. Those two years have been to me like a long, long life, so much of danger and trouble and suffering have been compassed in them. Were I to tell you all, you'd own that few men could have borne my burden without being crushed by it. It was not death in any common shape that I confronted; but I must not speak of this. What I would say is, that through all the perils I passed, one image floated before me—one voice was in my ear. It was yours."

"Dear Harry, let me implore you not to go back to these things."

"I must, Florence—I must," said he, still more sadly. "If I pain you, it is only your fair share of suffering."

"My fair share! And why?"

"For this reason. When I knew you first, I was a worn-out, weary, heart-sick man of the world. Young as I was, I was weary of it all; I thought I had tasted of whatever it had of sweet or bitter. I had no wish to renew my experiences. I felt there was a road to go, and I began my life-journey without interest, or anxiety, or hope. You taught me otherwise, Florence; you revived the heart that was all but cold, and brought it back to life and energy; you inspired me with high ambitions and noble desires; you gave confidence where there had been distrust, and hope where there had been indifference."

"There, there!" cried she, eagerly; "there comes another squall. You must take the helm; I am getting frightened."

"You are calmer than I am, Florence dearest. Hear me out. Why, I ask you—why call me back to an existence which you intended to make valueless to me? Why ask me to go a road where you refused to journey?"

"Do come here! I know not what I am doing. And see, it grows darker and darker over yonder!"

"You steered me into stormier waters, and had few compunctions for it. Hear me out, Florence. For you I came back to a life that I ceased to care for; for you I took on me cares, and dangers, and crosses, and conquered them all; for you I won honours, high rewards, and riches, and now I come to lay them at your feet, and say, 'Weigh all these against the proofs of that other man's affection. Put into one scale these successes, won alone for *you;* these trials, these wounds—and into the other some humdrum letters of that good-enough creature, who is no more worthy of *you* than he has the courage to declare it.'"

As he spoke, a clap of thunder, sharp as a cannon-shot, broke above their heads, and a squall struck the boat aloft, bending her over till she half filled with water, throwing at the same time the young girl from her place to the lee-side of the boat.

Lifting her up, Calvert placed her on the seat, while he supported her with one arm, and with the other hand grasped the tiller.

"Is there danger?" whispered she, faintly.

"No, dearest, none. I'll bale out the water when the wind lulls a little. Sit close up here, and all will be well."

The boat, however, deeply laden, no longer rose over the waves, but dipped her bow and took in more water at every plunge.

"Tell me this hand is mine, my own dearest Florence—mine for ever, and see how it will nerve my arm. I am powerless if I am hopeless. Tell me that I have something to live for, and I live."

"Oh, Harry, is it when my heart is dying with fear that you ask me this? Is it generous—is it fair? There! the sail is gone! the ropes are torn across."

"It is only the jib, darling, and we shall be better without it. Speak, Florence! say it is my own wife I am saving—not the bride of that man, who, if he were here, would be at your feet in craven terror this instant."

"There goes the mast!"

At the word the spar snapped close to the thwart and fell over the side, carrying the sail with it. The boat now lay with one gunwale completely under water, helpless and waterlogged. A wild shriek burst from the girl, who thought all was lost.

"Courage, dearest — courage! she'll float

still. Hold close to me, and fear nothing. It is not Loyd's arm you have to trust to, but that of one who never knew terror!"

The waves surged up now with every heaving of the boat, so as to reach their breasts, and, sometimes striking on the weather-side, broke in great sheets of water over them.

"Oh, can you save us, Harry—can you save us?" cried she.

"Yes, if there's aught worth saving," said he, sternly. "It is not safety that I am thinking of; it is what is to come after. Have I your promise? Are you mine?"

"Oh! do not ask me this; have pity on me."

"Where is your pity for me? Be quick, or it will be too late. Answer me—mine or his?"

"His to the last!" cried she, with a wild shriek; and, clasping both her hands above her head, she would have fallen had he not held her.

"One chance more. Refuse me, and I leave you to your fate!" he cried, sternly.

She could not speak, but in the agony of her terror she threw her arms around and clasped him wildly. The dark dense cloud that rested on the lake was rent asunder by a flash of lightning at the instant, and a sound like a thousand great guns shook the air. The wind, skimming the sea, carried sheets of water along and almost submerged the boat as they passed.

"Yes or no!" shouted Calvert, madly, as he struggled to disengage himself from her grasp.

"No!" she cried, with a wild yell that rung above all the din of the storm, and as she said it he threw her arms wide and flung her from him. Then, tearing off his coat, plunged into the lake.

The thick clouds as they rolled down from the Alps to meet the wind, settled over the lake, making a blackness almost like night, and only broken by the white flashes of the lightning. The thunder rolled out as it alone does in these mountain regions, where the echoes keep on repeating till they fill the very air with their deafening clamour. Scarcely was Calvert a few yards from the boat than he turned to swim back to her, but already was she hid from his view. The waves ran high, and the drift foam blinded him at every instant. He shouted aloud at the top of his voice; he screamed "Florence! Florence!" but the din around drowned his weak efforts, and he could not even hear his own words. With his brain mad by excitement, he fancied every instant that he heard his name called, and turned, now hither, now thither, in wild confusion. Meanwhile, the storm deepened, and the wind smote the sea with frequent claps, sharp and sudden as the rush of steam from some great steam-pipe. Whether his head reeled with the terrible uproar around, or that his mind gave way between agony and doubt, who can tell? He swam madly on and on, breasting the waves with his strong chest, and lost to almost all consciousness, save of the muscular effort he was making—none saw him more!

The evening was approaching, the storm had subsided, and the tall Alps shone out in all the varied colours of rock, or herbage, or snow-peak; and the blue lake at the foot, in its waveless surface, repeated all their grand outlines and all their glorious tints. The water was covered with row-boats in every direction, sent out to seek for Florence and her companion. They were soon perceived to cluster round one spot, where a dismasted boat lay half-filled with water, and a figure, as of a girl sleeping, lay in the stern, her head resting on the gunwale. It was Florence, still breathing, still living, but terror-stricken, lost to all consciousness, her limbs stiffened with cold. She was lifted into a boat and carried on shore.

Happier for her the long death-like sleep—that lasted for days—than the first vague dawn of consciousness, when her senses returning, brought up the terrible memory of the storm, and the last scene with Calvert. With a heart-rending cry for mercy she would start up in bed, and, before her cry had well subsided, would come the consciousness that the peril was past, and then, with a mournful sigh, would she sink back again to try and regain sufficient self-control to betray nothing; not even of him who had deserted her.

Week after week rolled by, and she made but slow progress towards recovery. There was not, it is true, what the doctors could pronounce to be malady — her heightened pulse alone was feverish—but a great shock had shaken her, and its effects remained in an utter apathy and indifference to everything around her.

She wished to be alone—to be left in complete solitude, and the room darkened. The merest stir or movement in the house jarred on her nerves and irritated her, and with this came back paroxysms of excitement that recalled the storm and the wreck. Sad, therefore, and sorrowful to see as were the long hours of her dreary apathy, they were less painful than these intervals of acute sensibility; and between the two her mind vibrated.

One evening, about a month after the wreck, Emily came down to her aunt's room to say that she had been speaking about Joseph to Florry. "I was telling her how he was detained at Calcutta, and could not be here before the second mail from India; and her reply was, 'It is quite as well. He will be less shocked when he sees me.'"

"Has she never asked about Calvert," asked the old lady.

"Never. Not once. I half suspect, however, that she overheard us that evening when we were talking of him, and wondering that he had never been seen again. For she said afterwards, 'Do not say before me what you desire me not to hear, for I hear frequently when I am unable to speak, or even make a sign in reply.'"

"But it is strange that nothing should ever be known of him."

"No, aunt. Carlo says several have been drowned in this lake whose bodies have never been found. He has some sort of explanation, about deep currents that set in amongst the rocks at the bottom, which I could not understand."

The days dragged on as before. Miss

Grainger, after some struggles about how to accomplish the task, took courage, and wrote to Miss Sophia Calvert, to inform her of the disastrous event which had occurred, and the loss of her cousin. The letter was, however, left without any acknowledgment whatever, and save in some chance whisperings between Emily and her aunt, the name of Calvert was never spoken of again.

Only a few days before Christmas a telegraph told them that Loyd had reached Trieste, and would be with them in a few days. By this time Florence had recovered much of her strength and some of her looks. She was glad, very glad, to hear that Joseph was coming; but her joy was not excessive. Her whole nature seemed to have been toned down by that terrible incident to a state of calm resignation to accept whatever came with little of joy or sorrow; to submit to, rather than partake of, the changeful fortunes of life. It was thus Loyd found her when he came, and, to his thinking, she was more charming, more lovable, than ever. The sudden caprices, which so often had worried him, were gone, and in their place there was a gentle tranquillity of character which suited every trait of his own nature, and rendered her more than ever companionable to him. Warned by her aunt and sister to avoid the topic of the storm, he never alluded to it in any shape to Florence; but one evening, as, after a long walk together, she lay down to rest before tea-time, he took Milly's arm and led her into the garden.

"She has told me all, Milly," said he, with some emotion; "at least, all that she can remember of that terrible day."

CHAPTER XXIV. THE LAST AND THE SHORTEST.

Loyd was married to Florence; they went to India, and in due time—even earlier than due time—he was promoted from rank to rank till he reached the dignity of chief judge of a district, a position which he filled with dignity and credit.

Few were more prosperous in all the relations of their lives. They were fortunate in almost everything, even to their residence near Simlah, on the slope of the Himalaya: they seemed to have all the goods of fortune at their feet. In India, where hospitality is less a virtue than a custom, Loyd's house was much frequented, his own agreeable manners, and the charming qualities of his wife, had given them a wide-spread notoriety, and few journeyed through their district without seeking their acquaintance.

"You don't know who is coming here to dinner to-day, Florry," said Loyd, one morning at breakfast; "some one you will be glad to see, even for a memory of Europe—Stockwell."

"Stockwell? I don't remember Stockwell."

"Not remember him? And he so full of the charming reception you gave him at Orta, where he photographed the villa, and you and Emily in the porch, and Aunt Grainger washing her poodle in the flower-garden?"

"Oh, to be sure I do, but he would never let us have a copy of it, he was so afraid Aunt Grainger would take it ill; and then he went away very suddenly; if I mistake not, he was called off by telegram on the very day he was to dine with us."

"Perhaps he'll have less compunctions now that your aunt is so unlikely to see herself so immortalised. I'm to go over to Behasana to fetch him, and I'll ask if he has a copy."

His day's duties over, Loyd went across to the camp where his friend Stockwell was staying. He brought him back, and the photographs were soon produced.

"My wife," said Loyd, "wishes to see some of her old Italian scenes. Have you any of those you took in Italy?"

"Yes, I have some half-dozen yonder. There they are, with their names on the back of them. This was the little inn you recommended me to stop at, with the vine terrace at the back of it. Here, you see the clump of cypress-trees next the boat-house."

"Ay, but she wants a little domestic scene at the villa, with her aunt making the morning toilet of her poodle. Have you got that?"

"To be sure I have; and—not exactly as a pendant to it, for it is terrific rather than droll—I have got a storm-scene that I took the morning I came away. The horses were just being harnessed, for I received a telegram informing me I must be at Ancona two days earlier than I looked for to catch the India mail, and I was taking the last view before I started. I was in a tremendous hurry, and the whole thing is smudged and scarce distinguishable. It was the grandest storm I ever witnessed. The whole sky grew black, and seemed to descend to meet the lake, as it was lashed to fury by the wind. I had to get a peasant to hold the instrument for me as I caught one effect—merely one. The moment was happy, it was just when a great glare of lightning burst through the black mass of cloud, and lit up the centre of the lake, at the very moment that a dismasted boat was being drifted along to, I suppose, certain destruction. Here it is, and here are, as well as I can make out, two figures. They are certainly figures, blurred as they are, and that is clearly a woman clinging to a man who is throwing her off: the action is plainly that. I have called it a Rent in a Cloud."

"Don't bring this to-day, Stockwell," said Loyd, as the cold sweat burst over his face and forehead; "and, when you talk of Orta to my wife, say nothing of the Rent in a Cloud."

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXIII. THE BLANK HEART OF THE SCAPEGRACE.

EDGAR was left to enjoy the remainder of his Chambertin alone. He did ample justice to it, and was further privileged to smoke his cigar—a favour not extended to any other male visitor. It was, perhaps, as well, for the sake of peace and quiet, that the baroness did not "receive" when Edgar favoured the establishment with his presence. To tell the truth, he rather alarmed the feeble old ladies and gentlemen who composed his grand-aunt's social circle. He was a little too boisterous, and a little too insolent; and the old ladies and gentlemen, who were high-spirited, albeit feeble, declined, sometimes with considerable warmth, to bow to his dictation. But to his aunt he must always be Lord Paramount. She invariably deferred to him. He could never be in the wrong. Was he not her grand-nephew, the only being upon earth left to remind her of her English kindred?

The outbreak of the great French revolution had found Madame de Kergolay young, beautiful, and the wife of a nobleman of ancient descent and great wealth, distinguished in arms, and high in his sovereign's favour. In the haughty province of Brittany there was no estate better tended, and no château more stately, than belonged to the Kergolays of Vieux Sablons. The baroness bore her husband two daughters. They were destined to mate with nobles of as illustrious a line as their own. The revolution came sweeping down like a crimson deluge on society, and all was engulfed beneath its waves. M. de Kergolay emigrated, leaving his wife and infant children concealed in a convent in Paris. The manor-house of Vieux Sablons was sacked by the revolutionary troops, taken by a band of Chouan peasants, besieged, captured, its defenders slaughtered, itself at last gutted, fired, and demolished from basement to coping-stone. The convent in which Madame de Kergolay and her daughters had taken refuge was suppressed by the Convention, and the nuns were driven forth with blows and insults, some to perish of starvation, many to die on the Place de la Révolution. The Baron de Kergolay left the emigrant camp of Condé in disguise, and sought his wife in Paris. He was discovered, flung into the Conciergerie, and guillotined. Her husband's brothers, and scores of her relatives and friends, had already undergone the same fate. Her widowhood was yet green upon her, when she, too, was arrested and cast into the Abbaye. There, after a short time, both her children died of malignant fever. The smell of so much blood, the poor woman said, choked them. When Fouquier Tinville denounced the femme Kergolay before the revolutionary tribunal, she was half frantic, and a far fitter subject for a cell at Bicêtre than for the judgment of a criminal court. But she was condemned to death nevertheless. The revolutionary tribunal did not stick at trifles. All was fish that came to the net of terrorism. The Baronne de Kergolay was arrayed in the fatal camisole, and was mounting the cart which was to convey her to the scaffold, when the fall of Robespierre obtained for her a temporary reprieve, ultimately enlarged into a pardon. But she was not the less a proscribed and ruined ci-devant. She herself used to describe how she had begged for alms on the Quai des Orfèvres. After a period of unutterable privation and destitution, a friend found her out and stealthily helped her. That friend was her former footman from Vieux Sablons, Thomas Prudence. He had prospered, and grown wealthy even. The shipwreck had cast him, too, on the waves, but he had been strong and buoyant, and battled with them, and, clinging to spars and hencoops, had been saved. A portion of the sequestrated manor of Vieux Sablons was bestowed upon him by the Convention. He was looked upon with horror by the loyalist peasants as an acquirer of the national domains. Half a dozen attempts were made to assassinate him. He took army contracts, and waxed rich, and was hated by the Chouannerie. His house was decorated with fragments of the rich furniture and fittings of the château of Vieux Sablons. He was a staunch republican. He contrived, however, to furnish his old mistress with funds enabling her to reach England, and during her lengthened residence there, from 1796 to the fall of Napoleon, nearly twenty years, he conveyed to her no less a sum than ten thousand pounds sterling. It was but a mere trifle, he said—a wreck, a windfall—but it was all hers. Nay, he took advantage of the peace of Amiens

to freight a sloop at Nantes with the articles he had saved from the dismantled château, and send them to her whom he still called his châtelaine and benefactress.

Madame de Kergolay went down into Lancashire and abode for a long time at Preston, much beloved and respected by the old Catholic families in those parts. But the race to which she herself belonged, the Greyfaunts, she found decayed and almost extinct. One nephew, a country gentleman with estates mortgaged to their last rood, she discovered. The son of that nephew was Edgar Greyfaunt, who was born just before Waterloo.

When all was over with Napoleon, the Baronne de Kergolay, who had been living on the interest of the money sent her by Thomas Prudence, and who had even managed to put by some twenty hundred pounds of savings from her income, returned to France. It was not long before she heard of Thomas. The collapse of the Empire, which had restored her to society, had ruined him. On the profits of his army contracts he had started a cotton manufactory. He might have become a second Richard Lenoir, but peace came, and Manchester, all prohibitive and protective enactments notwithstanding, poked its nose of smoking brick into France, and Thomas Prudence was ruined. Madame de Kergolay hastened to the succour of the man who had saved her from starvation. But Thomas was old, and wanted little. "I am sick of commerce," he said. "My failure is a punishment for having taken contracts under the usurper. Diantre! how the rouleaux used to roll in, though. But that is all over now. I am growing old and foolish. Let me come back to you, Madame la Baronne, and be your footman. Promote me to be your butler if you like. I have my old livery still by me, and I will serve you as faithfully as I did in the days when you were the Châtelaine of Vieux Sablons."

"You shall be my friend and adviser in the evening of my days," cried Madame de Kergolay, clasping the old man's hand.

And so, indeed, Thomas Prudence, otherwise Vieux Sablons, was; but he would never consent to divest himself of his livery, or to consider himself as anything but an attached and favoured menial of the great house of Vieux Sablons.

In this light—the menial light—without the attachment or the favour, the octogenarian was regarded by the superb young gentleman now sipping his Chambertin, and smoking his cigar. This high and mighty prince, precisely as he thought it the most natural thing in the world that his grand-aunt should spoil and idolise himself, deemed it a matter of course that Vieux Sablons should be his very obedient, humble, obsequious, and contemned servant. A hundred times he had heard from his grand-aunt the story of the old man's devotion and self-sacrifice. He thought that a very natural thing, too. He knew perfectly well that every sou the baroness possessed had been given to her by the worn-out lacquey; but he treated him with calm and disdainful insolence. "Well," he would sometimes acknowledge, when remonstrated with by his grand-aunt for some unusual act of contumeliousness towards the ancient servitor, "perhaps he had at one time rendered some sort of service to the family. But it was ever so long ago. Besides, it was his duty; and the romantic kind of gratitude was only possible in virtuous dramas at the Gymnase." I wonder what would become of the world if acts of duty such as Thomas Prudence had performed were only possible in virtuous dramas at a playhouse!

One most salient characteristic of Edgar Greyfaunt would be overlooked, if it were omitted to mention that he entertained a profound contempt for the people among whom he was domiciled. He went into French society, and of the best, because his relationship to Madame de Kergolay opened to him dozens of doors in France, while his English appellation would have been quite powerless in like regard, in the country of his birth. He spoke French fluently, because he had been brought up at the Collége Louis-le-Grand; but no protectionist farmer had ever a livelier dislike, and heartier contempt, for the French than Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt. He held the Greyfaunts of Lancashire to be infinitely superior in point of extraction, status, and polish, not only to the Kergolays, but to all the Rohans, Noailles, Condés, or Montmorencys in the Libro d'Oro of France. As, however, it was only the allowance his grand-aunt made him that kept him from starving, he resigned himself to his lot, and contented himself with abusing and sneering at the people in whose midst he lived. "I have a turn for drawing and painting," he would remark to such English exquisites as he, from time to time, met in Paris; "and so, as a gentleman must do something in a country where there are no field sports worth having, and the Church is impossible, and Literature is snuffy and vulgar, and the Bar low, I moved the old lady to place me with Delaroche, who lets me do what I like, and makes much of me. In France, you know, it is the custom for artists to go into society. David, the scoundrel, was a baron, and so was Gros; and they give Us a plentiful share of crosses and red ribbons. A fellow doesn't mind going in for art if he's looked up to, and is decorated, and goes to court, and all that kind of thing. But it wouldn't do in England, you know. I should be obliged to go into the army, or something of that sort, and keep the paint-pot dark." After which profound exposition of the proprieties, Prince Greyfaunt's exquisite friends would opine that he had acted very sensibly, and that so long as he remained in that confounded hole, meaning Paris, it was just as well to spoil canvas as to do nothing at all. But he must never forget, they told him, what he owed to society, and when the old lady (meaning his grand-aunt) died, and cut up well, he would return to his native country, live as a gentleman should, and keep the paint-pots very dark indeed.

Prince Edgar had come to the end of his second cigar, and of the Chambertin too; he had taken his coffee, his petit verre, and his chasse. It was

nearly ten o'clock. On his condescending visits, the vigils of the Marais were prolonged until eleven, and it now occurred to him that he might join the ladies. "There will be that stupid old abbé prosing away as usual," he remarked with a yawn, "but I suppose I must endure him." Presently a bitter smile came over him at the thought that he had spoken of Lily as one of the "ladies." Who was the little thing? He would ask Vieux Sablons.

"A protégée of Madame la Baronne," replied the servitor, with a low bow.

"Charity, I suppose?" continued the young man.

"The usual charity and benevolence of Madame la Baronne," replied Thomas, laying respectful emphasis on the words.

"Ah! my good aunt does not consider that her charity has a tendency to eat her natural heirs out of house and home. Upon my word, her house is a receptacle for the lame, the halt, and the blind. I do believe that half the people who come here are no better than a pack of old paupers. My friends call this place the Dépôt de Mendicité. Who is that Babette, for instance?"

"Charity," repeated Vieux Sablons, "but a very excellent and faithful servant."

"As you also deem yourself, no doubt, my most exemplary Vieux Sablons," said Edgar, as he lazily rose. "I wonder where my aunt picked up that little English girl? Do you know?"

"No, sir," responded the ex-contractor, telling, with the purest intentions, a deliberate falsehood.

"Out of the gutter, I presume. My aunt is not particular. She prefers rags to ermine. The little thing is passable. What do you think, hey?"

"Monsieur is good enough to say so."

"She is more than passable, most respectable fox. Is there any kissing allowed in the pantry?"

"I respect my mistress and benefactress, I respect youth and innocence, and I respect myself," said the old man, in a low voice.

"The first we know all about; it is an old story. The second is youth and innocence's affair. The third concerns yourself, and is no very important matter. Well, I will go and see the little thing, and draw her out. Upon my honour, she is a great deal more than passable."

And, flinging his napkin on the table, he condescended to stroll into the drawing-room.

"Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt," muttered the old servant, as he clattered to and fro with the paraphernalia of the table, putting everything in its place in cupboard and pantry, "you are a gentilhomme; and the grand-nephew of my beloved mistress; and clever, and handsome, and very fashionable; but, upon my word, I think you have no more heart than this empty bottle."

He was holding the flask of Chambertin in his hand. There was just a drain of the rare old wine left, and he poured it into a glass and drank it off, and smacked his thin old lips. Although but dregs the dram was generous, and gave him courage for a bolder thought.

"And, upon my word, Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt," he concluded, "my private opinion is, that you are a very finished scoundrel, and will come to a bad end."

A little after eleven o'clock, the Prince lighted a cigar, and went down to the Café Anglais.

"How much money has he asked you for?" said the abbé, as the door closed behind Edgar.

"Five thousand francs," replied the baroness, putting her handkerchief to her eyes. "Poor dear fellow, he says he will be ruined if I cannot raise that sum by Tuesday next. Dear abbé, you must go to-morrow to my notary."

"And you have but ten thousand francs a year. Madame la Baronne, this misguided youth will be the ruin of you."

The Abbé Chatain was pacing the room with long soft strides, but a most melancholy visage.

"Let *him* be ruined," he resumed, halting. "Better that he should suffer than you, than your widows and orphans, than your beggars and penitents. Let him suffer. It may do him good."

Lily did not hear this lugubrious conversation. She was in bed. By the time the abbé had departed, she was asleep, dreaming of Edgar Greyfaunt.

CHAPTER XXXIV. POOR LITTLE LILY.

Woe for the little woman!—for she was a woman, now. She woke up the next morning, and she loved the Scapegrace.

Had any one come to her, and said, "Lily, you are in love," she would, with pretty earnestness, have repudiated the charge. She would have pleaded that she knew nothing about love; that she had read but few love-tales, and heard but few persons talk about love; that she had been Quite Alone all her life, and, in default (until very recently) of there being any one to love her, was ignorant of the precise manner in which affection, although directed towards another object, should be repudiated.

Woe for the little woman! She loved the Scapegrace nevertheless.

Love came to her as no smirking Cupid with purple wings to fetter her with shackles made from wreaths of roses. Love was no powdered shepherd, as in the tapestries in the baroness's chamber, with flowers in his wig, and ribbons to his crook. Love came silently, and sat over against her little bed, and said, "I am here; and, henceforth, you must be my slave and bondservant."

She was too weak to battle with him. She was too candid to deny him. She was too good to tell a lie to herself, and call love liking. She acknowledged him, bowed down before him, and gave herself up to him, a submissive truthful captive.

It seemed to be a love to which there had been no beginning, and to which there could be no end. Marriage—the thought never entered her head. Passion—she knew not what passion was. To be beloved again—she never nurtured a hope that he whom she loved would ever return her love, or even know of it. It was more the sublime side of the love of a child

for her doll; and, from the sublime to the ridiculous, there was, as usual, but one step. To lavish boundless affection on an object which was, to her, inanimate and unconscious; to pour terms of affection into deaf ears, to mirror herself in blind eyes, to gloat over breathless lips, to cherish an image which, without, is only paint, and varnish, and scraps of ribbon; and, within, only rags and sawdust—this is what the child does with her doll; and this is what Lily Floris did with the idol of Edgar Greyfaunt which she had built up in the corner of her soul. A spruce Fetish, forsooth. A golden calf, or one shining at least with the bravest Dutch metal. A curled and oiled Mumbo-Jumbo; but she worshipped it in secret, and with a devouring adoration. Had she, in her dreary childhood, been given more dolls to play with, she might not, perhaps, have been so ready to fall in love with the stalwart waxen puppet that was called Edgar Greyfaunt,

Do you reproach her for falling in love at first sight? Silly girls, at her age, and loving as she did, usually do so. The prudent virgins are vaccinated, and take the disorder slowly, and in the mildest form; albeit, on them, often, in middle life, the disease falls again with appalling virulence, and kills them. The foolish virgins catch the infection at once, and have it hot and strong; and happy are those who get over it, and rise again, cured, but scarred for life.

Besides, is there any love at first sight? One doubts it. Is not the first fortuitous rencounter with the object that is to be beloved, merely the realisation of an ideal that has been nourished in the heart for years? It seemed to Lily as though she had always been thinking of Edgar Greyfaunt ever since she was a child, and now he had come. She had always loved, and would always continue to love him.

Had there been two parties to this amorous action, a third might have interposed in the suit. An interpleader might have arisen, in the shape of jealousy. Lily would have dreamt of a rival, feared her, hated her perhaps; for as it is in the power of Love to mollify and sweeten all evil thoughts, so is it unhappily within his attributes to turn all that is good into poison and venom. But Lily was plaintiff, defendant, counsel, attorney, judge, jury, usher, and auditory all in one. She stated her own case, and replied to herself. She summed up herself, and herself gave the verdict, and herself delivered the verdict. It was always to the same effect: that she loved Edgar Greyfaunt.

But he, handsome, gifted, courted—did he love, was he beloved by, another? Well; Lily thought upon this sometimes, and trembled, and her heart swooned within her. But she was not always possessed by the thought. Love is so far merciful, as not perpetually to insist on the unknown eventuality. If the young who love in secret suffered this torture of fear without intermission, they would go out and drown themselves. If a man of threescore years and ten, who knows his end to be imminent, were always dwelling upon death, he would never be able to eat his dinner. Oblivion for the mind is as necessary as rest for the body, and is as beneficently meted out to us. Labour and thought, without surcease, would be intolerable.

The spiteful magician Love has the art of making all things appear as they are not; and has been revelling in that trick ever since he made the Fairy Queen enamoured of the weaver clown that had the jackass's head instead of his own clod pate. For thousands of years before that, maybe, he worked the same rascally spell. Love can transfer, transfuse, transmute, conjure dry leaves into guineas, dress up the daw in peacock's feathers, give the wolf sheep's clothing; turn Christopher Sly into a duke, the princess into a goose-girl, the pumpkin into a coach and six, and the Beast into Prince Azor; quite as often, believe me, the Beast is a Beast to the end of the chapter, only Beauty is stricken by Love with colour-blindness, and mistakes rusty black for brightest crimson. To Lily, Edgar Greyfaunt was at once (but it was all conjuring) invested with the most lovable attributes of the kind gentleman at Greenwich who had sat by her side at the dinner, and kissed her when she went away. Straightway she passed, in an arbitrary little parliament, an act for transferring stock; and under this act all the love standing in the Million per Cents in the name of William Long was handed over to Edgar Greyfaunt. Then she piled Pelion upon Ossa; she buttered the fat pig; she gilded the refined gold; she smothered her idol with roses. She gave him all the love she felt for the schoolmates who had been kind to her; for the Bunnycastles; for the good-hearted folks at Cutwig and Co.'s; for the very courier on board the steamer who had treated her with "joggolate." And lastly, she bestowed upon the vacuous inane Fetish (ah! but he was so beautiful!) all the immeasurable love she should have felt for the parents who had neglected and abandoned her. Was there none left for Madame de Kergolay, for kindly Madame Prudence, for the homely Babette, for the cheery Vieux Sablons, for the good priest? Well! there was gratitude, veneration; but, what would you have? When the Houses of Parliament are all ablaze, who thinks of the chimney that has caught fire in a second floor back in the Horseferry-road?

So much overwhelming overpowering love did did she give the handsome Fetish, that he might have staggered, and sunk under the weight. He happened, however, to know nothing about it; and had he known all about it, the handsome brute would not have understood it.

But the fires of her love were well banked up. The furious little furnace consumed its own smoke. It found no vent in sighs and moans, in confidences with women, in tender glances, in passionate letters, in sickly poetry (the which safety-valve has saved many estimable lads and lasses from the commission of suicide; the chief

advantages being that, once in love, any idiot can write poetry, and when one has written a hundred and thirty stanzas, and duly corrected them, they can always be torn up and crammed into the fire). Lily had no one to speak to, and no one to write to, about her love. A dim pervading consciousness came sometimes over her, warning her that if anybody about the place—the housekeeper, the old lacquey, the priest, the baroness—knew aught of her secret, the knowledge would be equivalent to her condemnation to death. And so, nothing short of the rack and the thumbscrew, or the delirium of brain fever, would have made her confess that terrible word of fatefulness.

What could the poor child do, then? Let concealment, like a worm in the bud, prey on her damask cheek? Not at all. Her love coveted and courted concealment. It had been engendered of a sudden, like a mushroom, and grew best in a cellar. It was a modest, and a timid and silent love. It would have died for very shame, had it been dragged into the open air. Its sequestration preyed by no means on Lily's cheek. It made her happy. It was company to her. Good and generous as the simple folks were among whom she had been mercifully thrown, Lily could but feel that they were strangers to her. But now she had this love, and she was no longer Quite Alone.

The love must have some vent, however, or her heart-strings would have cracked. There was an old harpsichord in the salon, playing on which she had often lulled Madame de Kergolay to sleep. She was no brilliant performer, for her music-lessons had been few and far between, and her practice had been furtively snatched from the menial occupations, and the hours of confinement and punishment, at the Pension Marcassin. But Lily had a quick ear, an adroit finger, and a pretty taste. There was a pile of old pigtail music on a cabinet by the harpsichord—madrigals and canzonets, ballads and complaintes—from "Vive Henri Quatre" to "La Belle Gabrielle," from "Charmante bergère, m'aimeras-tu?" to "J'ai vu Dorinde; elle me sourit." Lily had learnt to play these fusty charming productions—to know, even, something of Gluck, and Rameau, and Grétry. And sometimes even she ventured to sing in a low tender voice some ballad, English or French, that Madame de Kergolay loved. She found herself now, drifting from the decorous stream of graven music into a turbid ocean of voluntaries and capriccios. It was her love. Love was streaming from her heart, and down her rounded arms, and from her fingers on to the ebony and ivory of the keys. The baroness told her that she was fast becoming a brilliant player. The baroness sighed that she could not afford to buy her a pianoforte. She declared that she would hire one. The Abbé Chatain suggested a seraphine. None of them knew that it was Love who was the music-master.

And then, in the privacy of her little chamber she would strive to draw and delineate the features of the beautiful Fetish. Her fingers were unused to the pencil, and she gave up the attempt disconsolately. But in a bunch of flowers she could see his likeness; his face came forth among the crackling embers on the hearth; his profile undulated in the pattern of the wall-paper; it curled in the smoke from the house-tops. It was wreathed in the fleeciness of the summer clouds.

Once or twice, in the Luxembourg Gardens, she detected herself tracing the letter E with her parasol in the powdery gravel. But Prudence being with her she hastened to efface the letter and make diagrams of monstrous creatures with impossible noses and preternatural cocked-hats. Yet it seemed as if the letter E could never be rubbed out. Do all she could, it was indelible as the blood at Holyrood.

At home she was less cautious. Poetry, indeed, she eschewed, and, as has been said, she had no one to write to about him. But she found herself scribbling his name one day all over a blotting-pad. It was "Edgar Greyfaunt," "Monsieur Edgar Greyfaunt," "Captain Greyfaunt," "Le Chevalier Edgar de Greyfaunt," "Monsieur le Baron de Greyfaunt-Kergolay." Then she stopped; but why not have gone on to prince, or king, or kaiser? Had Edgar seen the blotting-pad, his enormous vanity would have had stomach for them all.

This is the way in which girls go on. Poor Lily indeed.

YOU MUST DRINK!

There is no help for it—if you enter a public-house in England, you must drink. The whole system of licensed victualling has been carefully designed and elaborately built up, to compel people to drink and to prevent them from doing anything else. It is a mere mockery to call it victualling. Victuals have nothing to do with it, unless you are willing to dignify with that name, cold sausages, heart-cakes, and Abernethy biscuits. It was different in the old days, when innkeepers wrote over their doors, "Entertainment for Man and Beast." Entertainment for beast, may still mean a cozy stall, a feed of corn, and clean straw; but entertainment for man at all houses not hotels, now means, drink, wholly drink, and nothing but drink.

See how, in these days, the publican is constantly leading the human horse (and ass) to the gin-and-water, and compelling him to drink, whether he will or no. He plants his house at a corner with swing-doors on all sides, like so many man-traps; while he blazons his walls with golden legends, which tell of all that is fine, and pure, and double diamond, and old crusted, and over-proof, in drink. He sits like a syren in shirt-sleeves on this gilded rock, and regards all mankind as having one appetite—thirst; and one organ—throat. Enter this glittering temple of the one sense, and you leave all liberty of action behind. Suppose you are weary, and seat yourself on an empty barrel

for a little while, without immediately ordering refreshment. The publican looks at you reproachfully, as much as to say, "You are a pretty fellow to come into my house and sit there without having anything to drink." If you are slow to take the hint in looks, he will soon remind you of your duty in words, "Now, sir, what can I serve you with?" Order an Abernethy biscuit and a glass of water, and see how he will look at you! He keeps biscuits merely to *oblige* his customers, to accommodate the women chiefly; and heart-cakes to beguile the children, while father remains to have another glass. Biscuits, as a transaction, per se, he regards as an irregularity, only to be permitted on rare and special occasions, and only then under protest. As to water in its native purity, without the admixture of something strong—something that is worthy of exact measurement and can be charged for—that is altogether out of the question. Monstrous! He can scarcely bring himself to administer to the weary urchin, who comes in to beg a "drink of water" in the name of charity. He feels it beneath his dignity to dispense such poor stuff. Throughout all the branches of the trade there is a mad dog's horror of water, as such. If you go to a brewery and mention the word "water," you are immediately fined for the offence in gin; if you go to a distillery and mention the word "water," you are fined for the offence in beer. Say "liquor," and you are safe. The publican has no objection to aqua vitæ, or eau de vie; but call it the *water* of life, and he will be more shocked than if you used bad language.

It is curious how this antipathy to water, how this constant effort to make the public drink strong liquors and to debar them from every other entertainment, pervades the whole trade. Take the bar practice of the publican. He erects a great glittering temple of Bacchus, and by dividing it into uncomfortable pens, carefully unprovided with seats, compels votaries either to keep on sacrificing to the god or to go away. At some halting-places in the City it is written up, "Rest, but do not loiter." Here it is, "Do not loiter, but drink." The minute you have finished your glass it is whipped away; not unfrequently it is whipped away before you have finished it. You are made to feel that you have no right to remain in the place another moment, unless you renew your consumption. The publican's look says plainly, "Don't be a dog in a manger; if you won't drink yourself, stand aside and let others drink."

Observe how the British temple of Bacchus is adorned; what fine arts the High Priest employs to excite the devotional feelings of his flock. If you enter a similar temple in that benighted and slavish country, France, you will find many things designed to delight the eye and surround your indulgence with an air of elegance and comfort. There are chairs for you to sit upon and little marble tables on which to rest your glass; for here you are not expected to empty liquor into yourself as from one vessel into another; and the walls are adorned with tasteful representations of fruit and flowers, and birds of gay plumage; with plaster casts, and statuettes, and other pleasing devices; while the counter glitters with vases full of real flowers, and elegant china dishes heaped with ripe and tempting fruits. But what do we find in Britannia, which is the pride of the ocean, also the home of the brave and the free? The temple is glittering enough, and costly enough, truly; but you must stand up to your devotions, and get through them in a thorough business-like fashion. The walls are adorned with pictures, whose frames alone are worth all the French decorations put together—pictures by those great masters Writer and Glazier, whose maxims written in letters of gold proclaim the virtues of Muggins's beer and Blotcher's gin, Burnmouth's brandy, and Liverburn's rum. Every panel contains a tablet of the law, which has but one commandment: "Thou shalt drink." Raise your eyes to the roof, and countless inscriptions on the beams lead you to the contemplation of that seventh heaven of delight to which you will be elevated if you obey the commandment and indulge in libations of Noseyman's port, or Blowout and Shandy's champagne of the finest brand. As for statuettes—behold Darby and Joan, and Daniel Lambert in ginger-beer bottle marble, with holes in their heads for spills, thus combining the useful with the beautiful. Fruit? Have you not the lemon sacred to the goddess of rum, and the divine gooseberry sublimated in champagne?

Let me say, before I go any further, that this is not a teetotal article; and that I am not writing with the view of inducing any one to take the pledge. I set out with the admission, that strong drink is a very good thing in its way, and that to many thousands it is a necessary thing. Still, I cannot admit it to be the Alpha and Omega of all refreshment, and I protest against the system which makes all places, of so-called public entertainment, simply and purely drinking-shops. The efforts of the publicans are every day more and more directed to this end. Some few years ago, almost every public-house had its parlour and taproom, the former devoted to the social foregatherings of neighbouring tradesmen, the latter provided with a fire and cooking utensils for the use of the labouring classes. The old-fashioned public-house parlour was the scene of right pleasant social meetings, after the labours of the day. Neighbours and cronies gathered together to discuss the affairs of the parish, or the politics of the nation, over a pipe and a pint or two of ale, and it was the landlord's pleasure to occupy the chair, and play host, and treat his customers as guests and friends. It is true, that when the customers were rather too long over their pints, the waiter would come in and make a bungling pretence of stirring the fire or turning up the gas, by way of a hint; but it was a hint that no one was obliged to take. In most modern houses, however, the parlour and taproom are done away with altogether, or converted into bars, where the customer must come, like a bucket

to a well, and fill himself and go away again. There are very few places for friendly gatherings and social converse left. And those few that remain are made as uncomfortable as possible. All games, however innocent, are forbidden, not by the law, but by the publican, because they interfere with drinking. The harmless bagatelle-table has long been banished. Cards and even dominoes are interdicted on any pretence whatever. And here our wise and paternal legislature arms the publican with a pretence of authority by inserting in his license a clause forbidding him to suffer any unlawful games, or any gaming whatsoever, in his house, which the publican liberally interprets to mean that he is not to suffer any amusements, however innocent, which will divert the minds of his customers, and limit the consumption of drink. Fully sensible of the evils of gambling, I must, nevertheless, question the wisdom of the law, which is so careful to prevent a man losing small sums at a game of chance, while it takes pains to compel him to spend his money in drink. Gambling, bad as it is, is responsible for very few crimes in comparison with drink.

The effect of the public-house system as it exists at present in all large towns, is to promote excessive drinking, for drinking sake, and to throw all the drinking, whether in excess or moderation, into the hands—or rather down the throats—of one class and one sex. The upper classes are independent of the public-house. They can afford to have all they require at home; and if they hunger or thirst when they are out of doors, they can afford to go to first-class hotels. The rest of the population (for nearly all public purposes one class) is, in a great measure, dependent upon the puplic-house for out-door refreshment. But the public-house, being in all its departments a rough-and-ready stand-up constituted drink-shop, can be visited only by men. Few women not of a low class ever enter a London public-house; or, if they do, they sneak in with a sense of shame, conscious that it is a very unfit place for a decent women to be seen in. Now, I hold that what is good for the goose is good for the gander; or rather in this case, I should say, what is good for the gander is good for the goose. Women require refreshment as well as men, and I believe it will not be denied that they are fond of a little social converse over a cup of tea, with, occasionally, a little drop of something in it. But, out of doors, they are wholly deprived of this; and in these days of railways and cheap excursions, women are almost as much out of doors as men. The so-called house of public entertainment affords no fitting accommodation for respectable women; the rooms, where there are any, are not adapted for women, nor is the company. Men are so accustomed to congregate among themselves in drinking-bars, and to use rough and indelicate language, that they cannot readily emancipate themselves from the genius loci even when a decent woman appears among them. They are apt to regard any woman who shows herself in such a place as no better than she should be. Thus the public-house system shuts out the great mass of women of the middle and lower classes from those necessaries, conveniences, and pleasures which ladies of the upper class are enabled to enjoy, and do enjoy daily, at hotels. I cannot admit the pastrycook's to be any mitigation of this very hard case. Why cannot the people go to the pastrycook's for refreshment? Marie Antoinette said something of this kind when she was told that the people were starving for want of bread. "Why don't they eat sponge cakes," she exclaimed. The truth is, that the pastrycook's is even less adapted to meet the wants of refreshment seekers than the public-house. Its eatables are chiefly puffs, and tarts, and sweetmeats; its drinkables, lemonade, ginger-beer, and cherry-brandy—matters calculated neither to appease the appetite nor to agree with the stomach. The prices are high, and the accommodation is limited. Men despise the pastrycook's. The new licensing act permits pastrycooks to sell wine; and in their windows, among the buns, and tarts, and sugar-sticks, may now be seen little bottles of hock, and claret, and Moselle. This is a step in the right direction; but it is really of no advantage to any one while the pastrycook's shop is shunned by the men folks. Women don't like to sit and drink wine by themselves; they lack the courage to order it, though they are longing for a glass all the while.

How much better they manage these matters in France, where, as regards drink, there are no vested interests, no strictly guarded monopolies, and where the trade is, to a great extent, free and untrammelled! We boast in England of free trade; but, in this particular respect, we are far behind France. In that country, a public-house is a place combining elegance with comfort and convenience; its rooms are spacious, and handsomely appointed for the use of both sexes; refreshments of all kinds are served; and games and amusements are not only tolerated, but encouraged.

In a Parisian café you will find as many women as men—respectable women, too, who come with their husbands, and bring their children with them. There they sit in a family group round a marble table, sipping their coffee, or their wine, thinking it no shame to be seen by any of their neighbours, because there is nothing to be ashamed of. The café is not simply a drinking-shop. There is no necessity to drink anything stronger than coffee or eau sucré; and you may sit at your table as long as you please, read the paper, play at dominoes, or chat with your friends. All the amenities of private life are strictly observed. The men are gallant and polite; you never hear a word that could offend the most sensitive, and you never—or very rarely indeed—see any one tipsy. There is nothing about the place to suggest the drinking-shop, or to impress you with the obligation to drink. You feel that you are at liberty to take your ease and pleasure, and do as you like. So accustomed is the landlord to

look upon his house as a place for the convenience and general entertainment of the public, that he will sometimes take more interest in a game of dominoes or piquet than in the vending of his goods. Madame will have to shriek to him to come and attend to his business. In Paris, even the lowest classes take their wine like gentlemen; in London, they swill their liquors like pigs. A London public-house is a trough.

It is strange that the philanthropists who are so zealous in the cause of temperance, and so anxious to promote sobriety among the people, have never sought to further their laudable object in the only way that is possible; namely, by attacking the licensing system. They can never hope to obtain a Maine Liquor Law; they can never hope to make the great body of the lower classes, teetotallers. The public-house will exist in spite of them. This being granted, it simply remains for the friends of the people to take as much of the sting out of the public-house as possible, and to reduce its evils to the lowest. This, I have no hesitation in saying, is only to be done by breaking up the existing monopoly, so elaborately built up, and so firmly maintained by the manufacturers and sellers of drink, and *throwing the trade open*. The tyranny of the British drink interest is something positively monstrous; and its power is complete. It dictates to the people what they shall drink, and what they shall not drink. It has been able almost entirely to defeat Mr. Gladstone's measure for the reduction of the wine duties. The measure is law, but to all intents and purposes the law is a dead letter at public-houses. Good sound drinkable claret and Chablis can be sold in London for less money than in Paris, because the duty and the carriage together do not amount to so much as the octroi charged at the barriers of the latter city. But the London publicans have combined to resist the introduction of these cheap and harmless wines; and hitherto with perfect success. Very few of them keep light French or German wines; and those who do, charge four shillings a bottle for a wine which may be obtained from some of the new wine companies at twelve shillings a dozen. There are a few French and Italian restaurants in the neighbourhood of Leicester-square, where light French and German wines may be obtained at prices varying from one to three shillings a bottle. If I desire a substantial dinner off the joint, with the agreeable accompaniment of light wine, both cheap and good, I know of only one house, and that is in the Strand, close by Dane's Inn. There you may wash down the roast beef of old England with excellent Burgundy at two shillings a bottle, or you may be supplied with half a bottle for a shilling. Generally, however, at hotels and dining-rooms, four, five, six, and even seven, shillings a bottle are still charged for ordinaire, dignified with the names of claret and Burgundy. The price is a prohibitive one, put on in the interests of British beer and spirits, and British port and sherry: which latter, in spite of the reduction of the duty, are still maintained at the old standard price of five shillings a bottle. The publicans, while in this matter they tyrannise over the people, are themselves the slaves of those arch tyrants, the brewers and distillers. They must not allow any liquors—not even good strong alcoholic port and sherry—to compete with native beer and gin. The only remedy for this state of things is the measure of which the teetotallers are most afraid—the throwing open of the trade. If those purblind philanthropists did not aim at a great Teetotal Utopia, they could not fail to be convinced by the simple logic of facts. Do away with an artificial and tyrannical monopoly, and you introduce a competition which must appeal to the suffrages and favour of the public. You make the public the masters instead of the slaves of those who serve them; and you make demand regulate supply instead of giving supply the power to control demand. A measure of this kind cannot fail to call into existence a new and improved class of refreshment-houses, and anything that tends to render these places fit resorts for the respectable classes of society of both sexes, must necessarily promote temperance and good manners. The laws of free trade are too well ascertained, to leave any apprehension, even in the mind of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, of loss to the revenue in consequence of such a change. The same, if not a greater, quantity of drink will be consumed; but it will be shared more equally. It will no longer be dispensed by a monopoly of hands, nor swallowed by a monopoly of throats.

THE ENTOMOLOGIST GONE SOUTH.

It is all very well to talk of the "Sunny South," of its fruits and its flowers, and its gaudy winged creatures, of its orange and magnolia groves, and of its balmy breezes. All is not poetry and song, even in the land of the cypress and myrtle. But then what might very much try the patience of one traveller, would gratify another. For instance, mosquitoes!

One can imagine an entomologist, on his first visit to a southern clime, hailing the sight even of a mosquito, or of the "cloud of white ephemeræ fluttering in the dusk like a summer snow," with something of that "thrill of emotion not unmixed with awe," that "among the happy memories of a month's eventful tour," will, according to Professor Kingsley's testimony, "stand out as beacon points." The man who is no entomologist deserves only to know a mosquito by his bite. For obvious reasons—philosophical, tangible, and opportune, entomology is among the requisites for all who travel South.

The entomologist gone South will rejoice in those pointed attentions which Hymenoptera, Neuroptera, and their zealous cousins, after the example of all Southern-born creatures, are used to show to their visitors. What common mortals call abominable plagues, will be for him transformed into magnificent opportunities.

Let his visit be to one of the Gulf States of America, say the neighbourhood of New Orleans

or Mobile. It is May, but flies are in full season.

Flies command a great deal of attention everywhere, particularly during the summer months in the American States. There, even so far north as New York, an attendant does not cease to wave the "fly-brush," a great bunch of peacock's feathers, four feet long perhaps, over the dinner-table for seven months out of the twelve. And as fly-brushes, dark rooms, impenetrable safes, refrigerators, and gauze coverings are needful in forty degrees of latitude north, we may be sure that the need for them does not decrease as one goes south. Therefore, requesting any Englishman who does not travel, to multiply his experience of common house flies—which Ugo Foscolo pronounced to be one of the three miseries of life even here—by five or five hundred thousand, I leave him to judge of the strength of the entomologist's opportunity of studying the ways of foreign flies.

Then as to the mosquitoes: There are some parts of Florida—the Everglades, and on the Mosquito River, near the eastern coast—where mosquitoes abound in such dense clouds that they have been known to extinguish a great blazing pine-wood fire in the open air, singeing their wings, and falling into it so fast that the fire, unable to consume them, they smother it. The wayfarer is thus placed in the awkward dilemma of having attracted his enemies by the necessary fire and light, which he is yet unable to keep burning.

The South gives the name "gnat" to a small, fly-like insect, with no beauty except to the entomologist; too small and too wingy even as food for young woodpeckers. For the practical education of man in endurance, these gnats must be useful, for they beset him in swarms, in clouds, unwearied, exhaustless, from "early morn till dewy eve." When once you are received into their happy circle, see if you can breathe without swallowing half a score; fix your attention on something else—if you can. They are not vicious; they do not bite nor sting you. They are simply foolish; they are devoted to you, and they love the very air you breathe. They hover round you, and do not forsake you. Not unless you untiringly wield a huge fan, and make it the sole business of the day to fan frantically morning, noon, and night. Otherwise, bear with them.

Here, then, at once, are three species for our entomologist, who has only to sit, lens in hand, and not wait long for an "object" to fly into his mouth. A sharp sting on the neck. Down goes the microscope, up goes the hand to dash away a "yellow fly," a gay sprightly creature somewhat less than a wasp; but with a loud pert buzz at being disturbed, he insists on again settling; for he has made up his little mind to dine off an entomologist's ear. He has beautiful iridescent wings, a head like a lovely emerald, a bright yellow striped body. He is a perfect gem of an insect, and if one is only patient, what an opportunity of examining him one can have if it is possible to tempt him with a bit of wrist. He generally comes alone, but makes amends for that by coming often. Everybody in the South has probably his own devoted yellow fly as body fly; and the young entomologist sums up his observation of the creature's habits when he says, "I don't believe the yellow flies eat anything but people."

With June and its abundant fruits and flowers, arrive fresh armies of winged creatures, though our three hosts already in occupation don't lower a spear. Wasps of various sizes, such as are never seen in England, bring to the entomologist new stores of recreation. They are less troublesome and malicious than the yellow flies, for they desire only the luscious fig, or the peach in your hand, or its juice upon your lip; and, if you let them gratify this very civilised taste, they will forthwith depart without trying to eat their benefactor. But the yellow fly aspires to eat you up. It is your blood he wants—fee, fa, fo, fum! Your blood he will have, and withal he alights so stealthily to ensure at least the first taste of his repast, that you know nothing of his having dropped in to dinner until he has stuck his fork of a proboscis deep into a juicy bit of you. The great merit of the yellow fly is that he does not get into your eyes. He also takes care that you shall not swallow him. He does not blow down on us, as the gnats do, in dense clouds, enter eyes, ears, nostrils, and set us sneezing, choking, weeping, starting furiously all at once. The entomologist can study him with his eyes open.

Following all these excellent specimens and opportunities, are other frequent visitors, of all colours and sizes, to keep those unhappy malcontents who are not entomologists in the constant penal exercise of driving them away. The yellow jacket vies with his brilliant cousin yellow fly in glory. Some, like him, are furnished with a poisonous proboscis, and, not being easily alarmed, defy the fan. Others come only to make your acquaintance; but, if not most courteously received, will not depart without a farewell sting.

These are only a few of the daily in-doors opportunities of studying Diptera, Hymenoptera, and Neuroptera, enjoyed by the entomologist who has gone South. But let him not suppose that his observations will be at all confined to these. All the "apteras," and "ipteras," and "opteras" will, in their turn, come to salute him; especially he will receive the attentions of an exceedingly beautiful specimen of the coleoptera, called chintz bug, which has a hard skin and beetle-like wings, splendid antennæ, and a most symmetrical form. He is an elegant bug truly, and a perfect jewel under the lens. He will be sure to make frequent excursions about you during the day, glibly scampering over your garments and under your sleeves. So long as he is unmolested he will run about quietly enough; but, should he unfortunately become entangled in your dress, or lose his way,

he is of so impatient and irritable a temper that he will impute the fault to you, and give you a bite—an awfully venomous bite it is, too.

It is, however, impossible to enumerate one's entomological opportunities, whether when sitting within the southern mansion, or inhaling the perfume of trailing and festooned roses upon the piazza. While the microscope is revealing to delighted eyes the wonderful apparatus by which the handsome "yellow jacket" carves one's skin, other delights, large and small, will hover round, or settle on one's cuff, especially in the shape of lovely little gem-like creatures which are simply beautiful, and as innocent as beauty should be. Plenty of these will come, quiet, graceful, pellucid—elegant insects, of every colour, whose entire organism is discernible through the transparent membrane which we call its skin—a heart, or lungs, or some strange digestive apparatus of two simple longitudinal serrated valves, palpitating to and fro, seeming, after all, to be all it has inside it, and to leave nothing else to palpitate; so exquisitely delicate, so slight and tender is each little thing of life; so fragile, yet so perfect, that as one gazes from its wonderful body to the lovely wings, its lustrous eyes, and its articulated antennæ, then, moving aside the lens held over it, can scarcely discern the fairy marvel.

We need not permit attention to be distracted by those myriads of ephemera that dart under the hat, or down the throat; they are not venomous, only numerous; they are harmless as the pretty green lizard that has lost its way among the folds of your skirt, and is now running up your sleeve, whence it is as glad to get away as you can be to part with it. I once had one upon my head. Its feet were, no doubt, entangled in my hair, for I felt a wonderful fuss and scuffling, and thought that some monstrous insect must be entertaining bad designs upon my scalp; when suddenly a lady, with a loud shriek, still more alarming than the fuss and scuffle I had felt, aimed a great blow at my head, and I turned in astonishment in time to catch sight of the terrified little creature in its coat of lovely green, as it was vanishing beneath the sofa. Not all the combined efforts—prompted by horrors—of the household could get me another peep; so lithe and rapid were its movements, that it had glided away through some imperceptible chink long ago.

In his sylvan ramble the only difficulty of the entomologist will be to know which first to secure of all the dazzling creatures that flit round. The air is alive with them. The cicada, from every branch rings forth its incessant whizzing clicking buzz, crescendo ad diminuendo, responsively or in chorus. Suddenly a splendid fellow with wings of burnished gold and crimson will start up, and as suddenly sink again invisible upon a fallen stem. In vain I seek for it, till again like a flash of fire he rises, and then vanishes once more. He settled close before me, but he is also a cicada, though not of the noisy tribe above; and, when he alights, his lovely wings are so compactly folded that he cannot be distinguished from the dingy bark

Lepidoptera like birds, and humming-birds like lepidoptera, creatures of long-lobed, brilliant wings, or a "wondrous length of tail;" others with preposterously attenuated legs, which seem to leave no body to convey, or with equally wonderful antennæ; elaborate jaws, with a globe of a body far in the rear; strange forms with such an elongated threadlike waist that it is a marvel how vitality can travel through it, creatures bright and dull, noisy and silent, offensive and defensive, but beautiful always, fill the eye with wealth.

After the entomologist has filled his specimen-boxes, he seldom knows how much he carries home about him. The thermometer stands at one hundred degrees, and he throws himself into a chair at the well-supplied table for his evening meal. Sweets and savoury dishes are attractive not to him alone. Not one flitting, hopping, crawling entomological specimen that has visited him during the day is now without its representative, from the great feathery lepidoptera that will come flopping into the lamp, and hurling itself among the glasses, or falling helplessly into the sugar-basin, or the huge coleoptera, two or three inches long, with terrible mandibles and wonderful antennæ, to innumerable smaller beetles, black, brown, and green; daddy-long-legs appears with a length of limb incredible; moths come, gnats and mosquitoes—flies, of course, and nondescripts innumerable. Such a buzzing and such a dashing, and such a flirting out of candles, such charges at your nose, such an entanglement of creatures among curls or whiskers, or the braids of hair; such mad plunges into the cream-jug or at preserves, and rash attacks upon soft butter-pats, whence there is no escape; such spinning and fizzing round your teacup, or under the knife and fork upon your plate; such incessant work for servants and children in the catching and despatching of these evening visitors, would be the death of a timid maiden lady of delicate Northern nerves; but the entomologist then dines in Paradise.

At length he beats a retreat to his chamber. The evening breeze comes gratefully through the open windows, but so also do the fresh specimens. In a few moments entangled legs and wings are struggling round the candle-wicks. The room is noisy with the monsters that dash against walls and ceiling, whence the concussion sends them whizzing to the floor. The candles are almost extinguished by their reckless assaults, and, in spite of the intolerable heat, even the sated entomologist is fain to close the windows in order that he may take his bath in peace. Then he finds that his skin, moist and sensitive from steady perspiration, is speckled all over. With what? Not only red spots and itching tumours, but with scores of little dark brown creatures, clinging and grappling so firmly that he cannot

brush them off. With delight he recognises in them divers species of "ticks," but he must detach each one quickly and carefully, and think himself lucky to have espied them soon enough. Moreover, he must discard from his chamber every garment he wore in the woods, for only the laundress can effectually rid him of the foreign multitude which has established colonies thereon.

That strange excrescence growing out of one shoulder, and another in his side, a third on his ribs, and more elsewhere, puzzle him for a minute. He must go close to the candle, and will find these to be halves of ticks of a larger kind—half only of each, the rest of the specimen being buried deeply, head-foremost, in his own flesh. Our friend will be very careful how he pulls them out, for these shining, tough little suctoria may be cut in two sometimes, before one can dislodge them. The entomologist will probably find himself made the habitat of three varieties of these small crab-like ticks. What with ticks proper, and those locally called red bugs, answering to our English harvest bugs, but which, in the South, arrive with the fruits and flowers of May, jiggers, chiggers, or chegoes and chinches; piques, nigua or tingua; punez, bêtes-rouges, cirons des paupières, brulots, and all other biting, stinging, and penetrating creatures, one gets such a mottled result, that it is impossible to decide which is the identical red bump or tumour that each insect has produced.

One other description of a minute tormentor can no more be evaded here than we can evade the ever-present specimen itself in that prolific sunny South. It is certainly not one of the acari, "whose motions are rather slow," or the "ricini, that live exclusively on the class aves," though it might even be the terrible sarcopta, that "were carried away to the sea in baskets-full." Its local name is chicken-mite, but whether it has eight legs, or whether it leaps or flies, I cannot declare. There is no escaping him. Like the chegoe, he attacks the freshly-landed European, which proves—as the illustrious Humboldt declared—that these little horrors "can distinguish what the most delicate chemical analysis has hitherto failed to do," namely, that "difference of blood, which forms so"—more than ever—"interesting a question" at the present day.

You are quietly seated within the house, reading, perhaps. Suddenly a sensation, as of a single hair drawn over your hand, causes you to look down. At first you see nothing; yet there is certainly something moving quickly towards your wrist or your knuckles, and, upon looking intently, you discover a tiny globule sliding or rolling along with amazing rapidity. It is so minute, that a touch will effectually check its career; but, if you are expert enough to catch it under your lens, you will see a creature so delicately formed and gracefully agile that you will recal its aspect with less unkindly feelings, though, withal, it is a very noxious insect, and you dare not spare its life. Its bite causes a very painful tumour, of which the poison may not be absorbed for many days. The effect is much the same as that produced by the almost invisible speck of life called red bug. Take care how you lean against the piazza upon which the pigeons are fond of alighting; be cautious how you handle even your pet birdlings; and avoid the hencoop at all hazards. Unless the poultry-yard is very carefully tended, the young chickens are destroyed by these acari. On a plantation near the Gulf of Mexico, where neglect had resulted in a terrible accumulation of chicken-mites, not a chicken, a young turkey, or a guinea-fowl could be reared during one entire season. The poor hens grew thin and sickly on their nests, and looked as if every drop of blood was drained from them; their combs and gills lost every vestige of colour; and, as soon as the little chickens were hatched, they were smothered with the mites, which were literally heaped up in the nests. These mites are not confined to poultry. Birds in cages, and the nests of wild birds, are alike infested, though the instinct of the latter is a match for them. The neglected domestic fowl is the greatest sufferer.

It is absolutely impossible to keep clear of these wonderfully active little creatures, which seem to fall from the air, or to convey themselves in some mysterious manner, suddenly alighting upon you, and causing a faint titillation by their rapid motion, which immediately betrays their presence.

The only way to cleanse the places which they infest, is to pour pailfuls of boiling water over the floor or ground. The negroes do not seem to be molested by them as the stranger is sure to be; and they do not "establish themselves under the cuticle" as the "chigger" does. It is from these latter parasites that the poor slaves with their bare feet often suffer to an extent which causes them the loss of their toes, owing to their neglect to extract the insect before depositing its eggs in the flesh.

Here surely are opportunities enough to satisfy the most inveterate of entomologists; but they are by no means all. Patience, however, shall not be exhausted by description of the prodigious spiders, of the venturesome earwigs, the terrible centipedes several inches long—all more or less venomous—and, worse than any, the scorpion. As to ants, a whole chapter might be devoted to them; but, for fear of discouragement to entomologists who have a thought of going South, I will not enlarge upon the difficulty of preserving specimens when they have been obtained; but just venture to hint that nothing short of air-tight mineral cases can be proof against the persevering mandibles and consuming ravages of the numerous tribes of ants, which seem to abound equally within and without the Southern mansion.

A distinguished naturalist has declared that it is "less terrible for the forest to resound with the roar of the lion than with the hum of the

gnat." I have not been among lions, but know the gnats, and am entirely of one mind with the distinguished naturalist.

THE THREE ESTATES.

I.

When Richelieu to the Clergy cried
"Six millions for the State!"
The Archbishop of Sens replied,
"God save the King! The great
And ancient rule hath been alway
That for the Public Good
The Clergy pray, the People pay,
The Nobles shed their blood."

"Good!" said the Spirit of the Age,
"Give and take is a doctrine sage."

II.

So, when the Royal Power had need
Of more than priestly prayer,
The Nobles for the Throne did bleed;
And then the Nobles were
The masters. When the Royal Power
Said to the People "Pay,"
The People paid; but from that hour
The masters rested they.

"Good!" saith the Spirit of the Age,
"Give and take is a doctrine sage."

TO LET.

It is an exceedingly unpleasant thing to live in a house which is, at the time when you are occupying it, to let.

I have no doubt that the policeman's family at the untenanted mansion round the corner will respond to the truth of this remark. What a time they have of it. How are they hunted from mansion to mansion, and from villa to villa. As soon as they get accustomed to the black beetles at the semi-detached cottage, they are transferred to the attentions of another and a larger species, at the "residence fit for a nobleman," which is the house agent's next venture. They must have a miserable time of it, and it is enough to make this constable's wife disparage the house which she is employed to show off, in order that she may be allowed to remain there in peace. That woman "lives out of her box," as the saying is, for it is not worth while to unpack it when she may have to leave at a moment's notice. Under these circumstances, of course the children cannot be kept as nice as might be, and certainly they might be nicer. Those children are somewhat to be pitied. Between the necessity of keeping quiet all day in order that father, who is a night p'liceman, may get his due amount of sleep, and the difficulty of accommodating their conduct to mother's temper, which her unsettled position renders irritable, they have enough to do. There is a nondescript dog, however, who lives upon the area steps, and does not care a pin how often the family moves, which animal is a great comfort to the children. He allows himself to be dragged about by them, and, in return, helps them off with their bread-and-dripping, which, with an occasional fly, keeps him going nicely.

These good people live rent-free all their lives, and have the opportunity of trying the air in different parts of the town, but they never seem to be happy. Their turn-up bedstead never has a permanent home, and their gridiron and their kettle are ever hanging on unaccustomed nails. It is not, however, of *their* troubles that it is just now my business to speak. I have to do with others, perhaps of a less material kind, but perhaps, to the man of feeling and emotion, yet more galling. It is bad, no doubt, to grovel among the foundations all your life, to live in unfurnished and ever-changing basements. It is also difficult to keep inquisitive persons, who come to see the house, out of the pantry, where your husband is in bed, and snoring horribly—for the day snoring of a night p'liceman is a thing altogether out of the way and apart from all other snoring whatsoever. Still, there are other vexations besides such as these, and this I hope, with the reader's permission, to show.

The "house to let" of which I would speak is to let furnished, and you, its temporary owner, are living in it till another occupant can be found. This is unpleasant. In the first place, there is a bill in the window, of itself a depressing thing, and that bill (which presents its reverse side to you in the house) you are always trying to read backwards. "This Desirable Residence to be Let, Furnished," takes a long time in the spelling out, and the house agent's name and address take longer still: yet in this pastime you find yourself engaged diligently, whenever you are in the room in whose window the bill is placed. The bill, too, is always coming undone at the corners, for glass is a slippery substance. This does not matter much, however, as you can set things right with a little mucilage or a wafer, which holds for a good half hour at the least. That servants should be unsettled and disorganised while living precariously in a house with a bill up, and that tradespeople should be attentive in calling with their accounts, seems only natural.

But what are such annoyances to those which are inflicted upon you by the people who come to see the house? They come at all hours, and catch you at all sorts of occupations. If you are a late riser, there comes an early bird who has no time to lose, and who particularly wishes to see the principal dressing-room, in which you are at the moment engaged in flattening a "feather" on the top of your head. You are afraid to lose a chance, and you let him in, and he takes the opportunity of overwhelming you with questions, which you answer at a considerable disadvantage, on account of the incomplete state of your morning preparations. These house-hunters, let it be repeated, come at all hours. They come when you are at breakfast and at luncheon, and stare at the shattered remains of these feasts. The empty egg-shells do not escape them; for them the sirloin is not streaked in vain. Again, they come when you are engaged in business; and, when your wife

has friends around her, the house-hunters rally in the drawing-room. They rally in the kitchen, moreover, when the joint is just "put down," and peep at it furtively behind the meat-screen.

Also, how they stare! At you, the proprietor, they stare so ferociously, that you ask yourself whether you really do bear the semblance of the human form, or whether you are an anthropop, with your head beneath your shoulders? They stare at your papers, at your letters lying open on the table, at your egg-shells, and at your streaky beef. They back out of the room in which you are sitting, in order that they may see the last of you, and they make an excuse to get in again before they leave the house, pretending that they want the measure of a certain recess in this particular apartment, into which they think they could squeeze a sofa of their own—as if there weren't sofas enough already. And mark! this stare is always one of disapproval and suspicion.

Under these circumstances, it is impossible for you to "settle to anything." You lose your time and neglect business. You don't feel as if anything in the house, or the house itself, belonged to you. The furniture wears a time-serving, sycophantic aspect. It will make itself useful to somebody else in a week or a fortnight from this time. Your dining-table will groan (to use a popular phrase) under the weight of another's joint, and your own especial easy-chair will adapt itself to the curves of another's legs. You might lock this piece of furniture away in the dark room up-stairs, but you have already put away a vast mass of things there, for which you have a regard, and after all you must leave *something* in the sitting-rooms. They look a little bare and robbed of knick-knacks, so to speak, already.

As to the people who come to inspect your house, they are of various kinds; encouraging, and discouraging, communicative, diffident. The fiercest customers are ladies. There are certain ladies of middle age, of plain appearance, sensibly dressed in materials that won't spoil, before whom any owner of a furnished house may reasonably quail. Terribly wise and practical are these ladies. You can't take them in with your elegantly appointed sitting-rooms, and your china, and your gimcracks, which, by-the-by, you mean to shut up when you leave the house. The middle-aged ladies only give one glance round, administer the shake-test to a suspicious looking chair which you have put into the shade, but on which everybody pounces—and then off they go to the bedroom and kitchen departments, where they are in their element. They lift up corners of counterpanes, and peer into bedticks. They want bed-curtains where they are absent, and object to them where they are present. They require additional chests of drawers, and are of opinion that your wardrobe with the looking-glass door takes up a great deal of room, and holds nothing. They object to your keeping one small room at the top of the house locked up, and when they have done disparaging the whole of your bedroom arrangements, and have abused your kitchen-range, and quarrelled with your boiler, and scorned your oven, they take to sniffing in your little hall, and muttering the objectionable word "drains."

There is something gratuitously insolent about the behaviour of these knowing ones. I offer them the article I have to dispose of, I don't ask them to take it, or even to look at it. If they choose to enter, let them observe closely and form their own conclusions. We court examination. With the exception of that chair with the mother of pearl let into the back—which has obviously disagreed with its constitution—all is fair and above-board. We don't ask these ladies for their opinions, so let them keep those opinions to themselves, instead of delivering them in all parts of the house, and in a loud key too. I even concede to these disagreeable persons a right to sniff in the passage, having done so myself on many occasions; but the results of such sniffings should never be communicated by these ladies to each other, till they get outside.

And there is yet another class of persons who might advantageously wait till they get outside to say their say. These are the ladies and gentlemen who portion out your rooms, and discuss the changes they think it would be desirable to make in your abode, before your very face. They keep your wife waiting and standing while they talk in the drawing-room: "Well, you know, dear, at a pinch we could put Jane into the room with the œil de bœuf—no, I forgot, that's to be locked up; very inconvenient." "But I'll tell you what we could do," breaks in another. "We could bring down the washing-stand out of the top front room, and the iron bedstead out of the garret." "Yes, that might do; you know she's very seldom with us, after all, dear girl; so much with the Orpiments, Lady Orpiment told me herself in so many words;" and so they go on.

There is, however, a possibility of simply walking out of the room while all this is going on, which is not the case when you get hold of one of those scourges of society—a communicative old gentleman, a class of individuals with whom—if you have a house to let—you will have very frequent dealings. He it is who once getting into the room in which you are secreted, begins to bow, and grin, and apologise, and make inquiries about the healthiness of the neighbourhood, or about anything else that promises to give him a start. "The fact is," he says, "that it's necessary for me to make inquiries as to that point—my wife, only—well, I won't mention her age, but as healthy a woman to look at as you'd see anywhere—is suffering from a throat affection, and I wish to be within easy reach of Dr. Flook, with whose name you are no doubt acquainted, and who seems to me thoroughly to understand the case, not that I expect that she will be long in the doctor's hands, indeed, I hope and trust that in the course of a month or so—although a similar

attack from which she suffered about five, no, six years ago, if I remember rightly, kept her confined to her room for eleven months—at the same time, Dr. Flook is of opinion that the attack in this case is much less severe;" and so *he* goes on. Nor have you any chance of escape from him and his tribe. Sometimes, too, this old gentleman will have a son, concerning whom he is loquacious. "The establishment would consist," this communicative person informs you, "of himself and his wife, and just one son. Indeed, it is on account of that son that they wish to come to town for a while. The fact is, that the boy, clever lad, made his way remarkably well hitherto, has got an appointment in the Admiralty, an appointment of rather an exceptional nature, too, his mother mainly instrumental in obtaining it through her cousin, Lord Torpedo, and as it will be necessary for the boy to be up in London, his mother thinks we ought to look after him a little just at first. A young fellow coming up to town for the first time wants something in the shape of a home."

Sometimes these communicative people raise your hopes by the encomiums which they pass upon your house, but it cannot be too distinctly understood that their praises, and even their promises, mean nothing. "Ah, very nice house, very nice house indeed," one of these individuals will say; "yes, I think it would suit me very well. I've got a house at present, a good way from here, at the other side of the town, a larger house than this, with more bedrooms. Indeed, it suits *me* very well, but my wife, she's taken a fancy to this particular neighbourhood, and nothing else will do, and ladies, you know, ladies must have their way. Yes, I think this house will do very well. When did you say it would be vacant? Ah, well, I think I shall take it—house agent, Mr. Smith, you say? Yes; oh, it will do very nicely." Of this gentleman you never hear again. He doesn't take the house, nor does he go near Mr. Smith, the agent.

There is a lady, too, with a flattering tongue, who is not to be relied on. She has a morose companion of the male sex with her, whom she in vain seeks to warm into enthusiasm. She it is who exclaims, "Oh, what a dear little conservatory; what charming pictures; bedrooms are nice and lofty, dear, aren't they?" To all which the gentleman only responds by uttering a sound which authors can only convey very inadequately by the monosyllable "Humph."

Yet of that man who says "Humph," there is more chance than of the flattering lady. It may be set down as an axiom, that when you have an article—house, horse, picture, what you will—to dispose of, and when a lady or gentleman praises that article very much, and says that he or she will call again, you may look upon such lady or gentleman thenceforth as non-existent for your purpose. The disparagers are disagreeable, but they have one merit at least, they are trustworthy.

And this stands to reason. Would *you*, if you were going to take a house, praise it to the owner's face? It would be madness. You would tempt him, on the spur of the moment, to change his sovereigns into guineas, to turn the scraper, and the letter-box, and the very finger-plates on the drawing-room door into fixtures, and invent a premium on the spot for your special benefit. No, no; if you mean to take a house, you disparage it, you look about you with an appearance of disgust, you mutter to your companion that "really you think the other house round the corner would suit you better," and that this particular residence is very dear. By doing this, you humble the owner of the property, you lower the worth of it in his own eyes. You keep him humble and diffident, and dispose him to penitence and abundant concession.

There is one more particular kind of house-hunter, without mention of whom this small list would be incomplete. This is the timid visitor, and a more difficult customer to deal with can hardly be imagined. There is no getting him to look at things. There is no getting him fairly into any room. He is so dreadfully afraid of intruding. He stands with his head thrust forward at the door. "This is the drawing-room," says the servant; to which the timid gentleman assents, but when invited to enter, emphatically declines to do so. "He can see from where he is, and it's very nice." Nothing will induce him to enter any room in which he catches sight of a human being; on the contrary, he skips back as if he had been shot, nor will he even "intrude" into any one of the sleeping apartments. From these he retires ghastly with fear, and, indeed, the impression conveyed by his whole conduct is that of an individual who believes that if he once gets inside any one of the rooms which he is invited to examine, he will be then and there shut up, and not be delivered without payment of a prodigious ransom.

This nervous gentleman may close the list of house-hunters. They are a timid and suspicious race, and seem to be on the look-out for snares and pitfals at every turn. No doubt their fears are not altogether groundless, a house—like a horse—being generally one great conglomerate mass of defects, which do not declare themselves until we have paid our money and lost all power of receding from the bargain.

[On re-perusing these pages, I cannot help observing that they are characterised by a depth of feeling which might lead some persons to suppose that, in describing some of the troubles of a gentleman with a house on his hands, I am treating of my own case. Nay, on one occasion I remark that I have even spoken in the first person singular. Let me then now banish all disguise, and frankly inform the reader that he is right. It *is* my house that is to let. Perhaps this may act as an advertisement. It's a nice house—Bronchitis Buildings, Brompton, Number 6. Come and see it; and as to the chair with the mother-of-pearl back, which

stands in the drawing-room behind the window-curtains—why, the best and kindest thing you can do is to let it alone.]

CORPULENCE BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

The world has recently been astonished at the diminution of Mr. Banting's size and weight, and that which has astonished the world has probably scandalised the faculty. For thirty long years had Mr. Banting spent his substance upon physicians and profited nought, for the more Mr. Banting made away with the substance of his purse, the more the substance of his body increased. At length, under the treatment of a leech more cunning than all the rest, Mr. Banting got rid of more than twelve inches of waist and forty-six pounds of weight.* And this wonderful result was brought about by no violent remedies, by no prescriptions hard to read and harder to pronounce, by no horrible operation involving chloroform and a plurality of surgeons. The remedies used were, so to say, conspicuous by their absence. They were chiefly bread, milk, and port wine—not swallowed, but abstained from. There was, it is true, in addition to these negative remedies, a certain positive remedy applied, an exquisite "cordial," such as we may suppose Apollo to have drunk whenever he got nervous about middle age, and a waist resembling rather the swell than the trough of the sea. What this wonderful "cordial" may be, remains, and is likely to remain, an engrossing, or, perhaps, rather an attenuating mystery. It is alkaline, Mr. Banting tells us, so that any one who may quaff thereof is in no danger of finding his milk of human kindness curdled by any acid possessing terrible and hitherto unknown properties.

There are physicians who tell us that the type of disease is changing or changed, and it might very reasonably be supposed that corpulence is one among the new phases of disease, if such new phases really exist. The luxuries of modern civilisation might be expected to favour the deposit of adipose tissue, just as coops and high feeding produce the famous foies gras for the patés of Strasbourg. But it may be some consolation to Mr. Banting, and all who are afflicted as he has been, to know that, if new types of disease have appeared, corpulence is certainly not one of them. Fat men have lived in all ages—at least all historical ages; and the faculty has apparently been in all ages about as successful in the cure of obesity as Mr. Banting found it between the ages of thirty-five and sixty-five. Falstaff owned to two yards round the waist, and yet he knew not port wine. If Falstaff had a weakness, it was for sack, or, in modern English, sherry, which Mr. Banting says is allowable. But doctors will differ occasionally. If the type of disease has changed, it is not impossible that men's constitutions may have changed, so that what fattened in Falstaff's time takes off flesh in ours. Be this as it may, fat may claim all the respect which is due to age, and, if we may judge from the nostrums recommended to diminish it, was considered rather an encumbrance than an ornament. "In case that a man be overgrown in stomach," says the Saxon Leech, who lived before the Conquest, and prescribed second-hand from Apuleius (he does not use the word stomach, but we substitute it for his expression), "seethe then the waybread largely, and let him eat then of it largely; then soon will the stomach dwindle." He prescribes the same herb, too, in a different form: "If thou then wilt reduce the size of a man's stomach, then take thou the wort; boil in vinegar; put then the juice and the wort so boiled into wine; let him drink then at night fasting." The very positive statement at the end of the first prescription is worth noting: "Then soon will the stomach dwindle." It is evident that very great success must have attended the Saxon doctor's practice, because men of science never venture to predict until they have made sure of a law or laws. Perhaps Mr. Banting's cordial is waybread?

But the Saxon doctors did not rely on a solitary remedy. They speak less confidently of some than of others; but they are not easily brought to their wits' end. Here is another prescription: "In case that a man be overwaxen in stomach, take juice of this wort, which the Greeks name ἵππουρις, and the Italians equisetum (horsetail), in sweetened wine; give to drink two draughts. It is confidently believed that it will heal that ill." The doctors differ again; Mr. Banting's adviser forbids all saccharine matter, the Saxon recommends it. This, again, is probably owing to difference of constitution: "nous avons changé tout cela," as Molière's doctor said.

The herbarium or pharmacopœia is not yet by any means exhausted, so far as corpulence is concerned. "In case a man be overgrown in the stomach, take roots of this wort, which the Greeks name μαλάχη αγρία, and the Romans hastulæ regia, and also the Engle call woodroffe, pound with wine, give to drink; soon thou shalt understand the advantage of this." Wine again, be it remarked, though the kind of wine is not specified. Saxon patients certainly had more agreeable remedies prescribed than the invalids of our generation. Why are all modern remedies nasty? Is there any connexion between truth at the bottom of a well, and health at the bottom of a very disagreeable cup? This problem presented itself to us at five years of age, and has never yet been satisfactorily solved—to our mind at least. "Soon thou shalt understand the advantage of this," modestly remarks the medical adviser of our forefathers; and be it remembered that he was prescribing wine long before fourteen shilling claret was known, and before British brandy had come into demand for the manufacture of port. The advantage of that prescription may, indeed, be readily understood.

* The principles laid down by Mr. Banting were propounded in Household Words in the year 1857. They were chiefly derived from a work by Dr. Dancel, a physician of Paris. The article is entitled The Art of Unfattening, and will be found at page 328 of volume xv.

But who would think of the water-lily as a cure for corpulence? It is not recommended so confidently as some of the others. It will not effect a cure in less than ten days; there is not even a positive assertion that a man's stomach will dwindle even in that time. "In case a man be overwaxen in stomach take seed of this wort, pound it with wine, and give it to drink. Again for the same, of the root, give it to the sick to eat for ten days." Imagine a fat man living on water-lilies for ten days. This prescription is at once poetical and practical. Falstaff, on such a diet, might be expected to become an innocent water-baby. This is the last prescription for "overwaxen stomach" we have been able to discover in Mr. Cockagne's Saxon Leechdoms, and it certainly looks like an ultimatum. If a water-lily diet will not cure a man, there is nothing left but Mr. Banting's "cordial," whatever that mysterious preparation may be. As modern constitutions seem to require the combination of a great number of drugs, it might be worth while to ascertain whether a decoction of waybread, horsetail, woodroffe, and water-lilies, mixed with amontillado, port (Sandemann's shipping), champagne (Veuve Cliquot), and claret (not Gladstone), would not prove the sovereign elixir in cases of obesity. The mixture would not be alkaline, certainly, but it might prove serviceable to constitutions differing from Mr. Banting's in all respects, save the tendency to accumulate fat. It cannot be supposed that Roman doctors handed down for generations prescriptions which were inefficacious or injurious. The science of medicine prides itself much on its antiquity, and to doubt the efficacy of ancient modes of treatment would be to detract from the science as it exists in the nineteenth century. The basis on which medicine rests is the experience of the past; to cut away whole centuries of that experience would be treason. Gentlemen, therefore, and ladies (if there be any) in search of tenuity, may possibly find relief from the remedies of the Saxon Leech-book, should they fail to find relief from Mr. Banting's system. Soon may their stomachs begin to dwindle!

FROM THE PEN OF A POLE.

In the spring of last year a Polish expedition, on its way to Lithuania, was wrecked on the coast of Sweden, and reluctantly compelled to remain there some time. I was attached as secretary to that expedition.

Shortly before leaving Sweden, where we experienced all sympathy and kindness, I learned by chance that three young Swedes in the Polish service had been betrayed into Russian captivity. When, therefore, I found that, at the command of the National Government, it was necessary for me to make a journey to Warsaw, I determined to avail myself of the opportunity, and, while serving my country, to obtain, if possible, the liberation of those three unfortunate young men.

For my own security, I possessed myself of a Swedish passport, and set out on my journey by way of Vienna and Cracow for the interior of Poland. I was thus enabled to spend ten days unknown in Warsaw, and, although the great object of my endeavour, the liberation of the three young Swedes, was frustrated by their having already been sent off to Siberia, yet I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had left no means untried for the accomplishment of this purpose. I succeeded, also, in maintaining my character as a foreigner; in delivering my report to the National Government, and receiving their further commission. I reached Copenhagen in good spirits, and Vienna on the 25th of August; stayed there three days, then proceeded by the Austrian railway to Cracow. Soldiers under arms awaited the train at every station. When we arrived in the morning at Cracow, the passengers were detained in the carriages till the police had taken their passports, and not till then were they allowed to enter the city.

I took up my quarters at the Hôtel de Saxe. Although it did not appear to harbour any one belonging to the national organisation, yet it was subjected almost every evening to a strict police examination. As early as five o'clock in the morning there was a loud knocking at the door. The street was full of soldiers, a commission entered, and all guests were subjected to the most rigid inquisition. This may be official zeal, but the police gives itself waste trouble. For example, nobody suspected me.

As for me, I shall escape the bullets of Mouravieff, whom we Poles call "the executioner." When quite young, that worthy showed what he was made of. He was brought up at a public school in Paris, and one day wrote to a lady whose son was his schoolfellow, telling her that her son was just dead, and describing his last moments, when, in fact, he was perfectly well. This practical joke upon a mother is matched by his present conduct.

The women in Cracow, as elsewhere in Poland, wear simple inexpensive mourning, and the men the insurgent dress, which is, in fact, the national costume; trousers tucked into tall boots, close-fitting coats, or French blouses with a girdle, a square-edged cap with the peak set at right angles. As in Warsaw, there are but few, if any, public amusements; but you will never see a Pole at any of them. While I was there a garden concert was given, but immediately afterwards a strong article came out in a Polish paper on the unseemliness of such amusements, and there were no more.

My mission to Cracow was accomplished, and I had to wait the commands of the National Government. As the time when I might receive them was uncertain, I obtained a national passport and permission to visit some friends in the corps of Major F., which was operating in the Radom government.

Making my arrangements, I found that I was to be accompanied by an old Polish captain, a combatant in the first war of independence, who

had lately come from Smyrna. At midnight we met at a public-house outside the town. The road we travelled appeared to be dreary and deserted. Here and there, one saw a wandering artisan stealing along in the dim starlight. These shadowy figures, which appear to conceal themselves as soon as they are observed, belong to that fay world which the National Government, in the guise of its organs of safety, has called forth. They are the safety-watch, to whom is confided the oversight of the connecting roads used by the national organisation, and which it takes care to keep up. This network of roads extends at the present time throughout the kingdom. In this system of public service, called the citizen post, every person authorised as a member of the National Government is obliged to take part. The postmaster appointed by the National Government is responsible for the safety of the roads. The safety of the roads and their immediate neighbourhood is the object of constant supervision. When we changed horses for the first time, which occupied five minutes, a mounted messenger was despatched in advance to the next station. This new road system, extending over the whole of Poland, unites village with village, town with town, and farm with farm, without at all making use of the public highways.

When we reached the next station, there was no carriage to take us forward. The horses, therefore, were saddled, and we continued our journey on horseback. A third Pole here joined himself to us. He was a young officer of Chmielinski's corps. He had been in as many as twenty engagements against the Russians, and had not been wounded. We rode for about four hours, when we again obtained a carriage. We were twice during our journey required to show our National Government passports, which each time received the little necessary stamp.

The journey occupied upwards of twenty hours, and I was very weary when, at about half-past eleven, we reached the little town of L., in the waiwode Radom. The word government has been introduced by the Russians, who have divided the kingdom of Poland into five governments—Augustowo and Plock in the north, Warsaw in the middle, Lublin in the west, and Radom in the east. The last-named government consists of a portion of the former waiwode of Cracow, according to the national division of the Polish kingdom.

Entering the town, we received tickets for our quarters. Mine, fortunately, were in a family of the better class, who received me in the kindest manner. It consisted of an elderly gentleman and lady, and several young daughters; the sons had been for the last three months at the camp.

At four o'clock next morning I had to continue my journey, the camp being a three hours' walk distant from the town. When I again rose, I found the family assembled, and we breakfasted by candlelight. Before parting, one of the young ladies requested me, in the name of herself and her sisters, to accept a pocket-handkerchief in remembrance of them. My initials were embroidered upon it in black and white. I was much affected, and would have regretted the sleepless night which the embroidery must have cost them, but I could not say a word. I took my leave, and, going to an appointed place, found about thirty young men, who, like myself, were bound to the camp. We set out, and passing the church, found a priest waiting for us, who blessed the little troop.

At half-past eight we came in sight of the first outposts, where chasseurs in green jackets, with muskets on their shoulders, received us with a volley. Our leader stepping forward and giving the watchword, we were allowed to pass, and reached a little hill, which afforded us a view of the camp. They had been here three days to recruit, and everything was in perfect order. Tents, which resembled a coup of playing-cards set up at an acute angle, were ranged in six lines, but there were only sixty tents for eight hundred men. Above small fires, burning on little hearths, gigantic pieces of meat were roasting and diffusing around a delicious odour. Horses were tied up to wooden posts, and soldiers were busied washing and rubbing them down. All, with the exception of the sentinels, the bakers, and cooks, hastened to meet us, and joyous words of welcome were mingled with mutual questions and vows of vengeance against the Russians.

We were conducted to Major F., who commanded this division, and one after another had his audience. The major honoured me with certain commissions, then offered me the use of his bed, which I gratefully accepted, and so slept till noon, when I was awakened, that I might be present at drill. It was splendid; and the major, coming up to me several times, clapped me on the shoulder, saying:

"Now, have you any doubt whether, with these devils of fellows, we shall kill the Muscovites?"

The Poles generally call all the Russians, Muscovites.

Three classes of military are represented in the camp—the scythemen (Kosyniory), chasseurs, and cavalry. The scythemen in the Polish army represent infantry; but the effect of their attack is much more terrible. With the cry, "Jesus Maria stand by us!" they hurl themselves on the foe. What care they for all the bayonets in the world, while the lance which is fastened to the scythe is generally longer than the musket and the bayonet together? When the scythemen charge, the enemy is mown to the earth. They leave none wounded; all are dead.

The Poles have to thank the scythemen for the successful issue of most of their engagements; and the greatest merit of their soldiers is, that they are, for the most part, peasants and men of the lowest class of the town populations. It is frequently said that the Polish peasantry does not take part in the insurrection, and unfortunately it is true. At the present time, however, the Russians have by their cruelties in the villages thrown the

whole rural population on the side of the insurgents, and now they merely wait for the days when the National Government shall command, and, above all, when they shall have weapons, to throw themselves en masse upon the savage enemy.

Lelewel, the fallen leader of the corps, caused many peasants to go over to the national cause. He was a native of Cracow, and his real name was Borelowski. By trade a simple pump-maker, he spread among his fellow-artisans the light of truth, and prepared their minds for sentiments of patriotism. During the years 1861-2, there was not a man in Warsaw who exercised a greater influence on the working classes than he. He went from workshop to workshop, talked with masters and men, appearing everywhere as the apostle of instruction and enlightenment. When evening schools were established at Warsaw, it was he who brought in the greater number of scholars. When also artisans' libraries were introduced, it was he who filled them with readers. The working classes loved him, and he enjoyed their fullest confidence. In 1861, at the time of the election of the city and provincial corporation, a hostile party arose in Warsaw, which threatened by public demonstration to defeat the election. But Lelewel called around him two thousand workmen, distributed them at the various places of voting, and acted so judiciously, that the population of Warsaw, spite of all inimical declarations, voted for the election. While Poland was preparing herself for the present revolutionary outbreak, Lelewel held the post of a popular leader, with a thousand men under him, and to the very moment of revolutionary action, was one of the most active members of the confederacy. His sound judgment and national instincts always preserved him within the limits of the national organisation. The programme and the statutes of the National Government were drawn up during July, 1862. From this moment Lelewel was the most faithful executor of the commands issued by the central committee. Amid the storms which arose among the yet unharmonised parties of the committee, he maintained this national institution with a fervent zeal. All this contributed to the still further extension of Lelewel's influence. It was no longer confined to Warsaw. It extended over the whole country. He went from town to town, from village to village, exercising everywhere his trade, and never came back to his home without having advanced the national cause. Even landed proprietors could not resist the influence of this simple-hearted man. He was always calm and collected, with an understanding always clear; the sight of the enemy could alone awaken a tumult in his tranquil breast. Misfortunes, instead of abating his courage, only served to multiply his efforts. He busied himself in the most active manner in the casting of type and the establishment of steam presses for secret printing; nay, he even attempted the manufacture of arms. The well-known proclamation of 1861, "To all Fellow-Countrymen," was of his printing, and was circulated by himself, too, in all cottages and workshops.

When the insurrection broke out, he was sent, during February, by the National Government to Podlachia, to form fresh corps of troops in place of battalions which went into Lithuania. From this time he adopted the name of Lelewel, from the great Polish historian, whom he admired: in order that by this means a worthy name might become universally known among the people. It was in this manner that he began his military career. Russians alone could tell how severe were the losses which this great Polish citizen occasioned them. It was in the field that Lelewel gave the finest example of a quiet and modest life, with the most unwearying activity. He never himself went to rest without having visited in person the outposts and sentinels. In the battle he never for a moment lost his coolness and presence of mind. Always full of courage, he was the last to leave a battle-field. Such was the man for whom all Poland weeps.

But now to return to our soldiers. Exasperation against the enemy was so great, that the commander could scarcely impress upon the rural portion of the troops that they ought to extend mercy to those who cried for pardon. Chmielinski's corps and a Russian corps under Czengiery, lay not far from each other. A Russian outpost losing his way, fell in with the Polish videttes. Two scythemen, who saw him, rushed forward with lifted scythes, but the fellow cried out, as soon as he saw them, "Pardon, pardon, brothers!" so pitifully and yet so comically, that the Poles allowed him to escape. When at forty paces' distance, happening to see some comrades, his courage returned, and, taking aim, he fired, and shot the scytheman who a few minutes before had given him his own life. The Poles who saw this (they were about ten in number) rushed forward in fury, and cut the traitor and three other Russians who had come to his aid, in pieces.

The only worthy opponents of the Poles are the Russian dragoons, giants all of them, and well armed. When cavalry are not needed, they dismount eight and eight, leaving the ninth to take care of the horses, and so make use of their muskets. The Cossacks are the hyænas of war, who attack their enemy from behind. They are great boasters, which is a Russian characteristic, and they cry in their flight, when pursued by the Poles, "We beg pardon!"

As for us, even our boys join in the fight. My own brother Stanislaus, only fourteen, was killed in the month of August, after having, with an Ulan regiment, taken part in four engagements.

The arms now in use are for the most part of excellent Belgian manufacture, but there is a great want of ammunition. The largest quantity of arms, ammunition, and other material of war which are imported into Poland pass the Prussian frontiers, because in Prussia as in Russia, the administration is rotten to the core. Many a loyal Prussian official first

acquires a fortune out of Polish money, and then betrays us in order to decorate his breast with the Red Eagle.

Cavalry horses are sent into the camp free of cost, or are purchased by the national intendant; necessaries of life are obtained from the country people.

After having inspected the troops, I and the whole corps of officers accompanied the major to his tent, where dinner was served at a table formed of a board nailed upon a tree-stump. The dinner consisted of a piece of roast beef; a cask of wine had been furnished by a nobleman in the district; and we had brought fresh bread with us from the town. "Long life" was drunk "to free Poland," and repeated with enthusiasm by the soldiers.

They were talking eagerly in the camp about a Russian spy. His name, I believe, was Niemeksza; he was seated on a waggon-load of peas with two other Russian soldiers, when he was seized by a patrol of Chmielinski's corps, and was about to be driven on to the camp, when it was perceived that he was scattering the peas along the road to serve the Russians as traces for their pursuit. This artifice, however, being observed in time, the patrol were about to shoot him, when he prayed so piteously for his life, and made it out so clearly that he was a fellow-countryman, that they spared him, and took him with them to the camp. When Chmielinski heard what they had done, he immediately gave orders to have the fellow hanged. The whole camp prayed for his life, but Chmielinski was immovable, and ordered him and two other spies for execution. The colonel's commands would have been punctually obeyed, but that the hangman blundering in some way with the noose, no sooner was Niemeksza hoisted up than he came down again, and at once began to beg and pray for his life afresh. The end was, that he again escaped death. After a few days there was again fighting, and the spy, availing himself of the opportunity, went over to the enemy, and, being rewarded with the cross of bravery, was sent to the garrison town of Kielce. Here one day he chanced to meet the executioner from the Polish camp; but, instead of showing his gratitude in any way, he gave him up to the police, and the compassionate Pole was hanged. After this, not many more spies will escape Polish vengeance.

On one occasion a female Russian spy fell into Chmielinski's hands. They shaved her head, and then gave her a pass, with the announcement that if ever she repeated her crime she would be hanged.

I returned to L., and thence to Cracow. Here I found the commands of the National Government awaiting me. They required my presence at Warsaw without delay; and I took leave of my friends on the following day. On leaving Cracow, I was again obliged to present my passport. In three hours we reached the Polish frontiers. The change was very apparent. Upwards of twenty soldiers with flat-nosed countenances, and in old grey coats and fantastic caps, no two alike, were in the station. Exit hence was barred, and we were obliged to give up our passports to an officer, who, as far as dirt was concerned, was no way superior to his soldiers, before we were allowed to leave the carriages. All the passengers were then collected into a little room, soon after which the officer in command appeared. He was a man of perfectly Tartar physiognomy, and examined us from top to toe with an impatient inquisitorial glance. Our passports were then stamped and marked with secret signs and returned to us; the same process was resumed on the examination of our luggage, and on the giving out of the railway tickets.

One of my travelling companions told a gentleman that I was a Swede, on my way to Warsaw to gain some information regarding my imprisoned countrymen. When I was about to take my seat, this same gentleman approached, offered me his hand, and, speaking very cordially in French, advised me how I had best proceed for the attainment of my object on reaching Warsaw.

"I am Commander D., of the Gonowska corps, in the waiwode of Warsaw," he said; "you see, therefore, sir, that you may follow my advice. I love the Swedes, with whose country I am acquainted, therefore I take an interest in you."

I bowed, pondering within myself how I was to receive all this, when a young lady, the wife of this gentleman, approached and showed the same family regard towards me.

Behind me stood the Russian excise-officer with his extended palm. I gave him ten copecks, an inconsiderable sum, but he received it nevertheless. After which the common soldiers thronged round me, each of whom called me "little gentleman," "little father," if I gave them anything, and "dog" if I did not.

The train was put in motion. I was seated in a first-class carriage, at first alone, but was joined by a young lady at the station where the Prussian line falls into this. That she was a Pole was evident from her mourning attire; a long black silk dress, a black burnous lined with black silk, and the white collar covered with black tulle. Some little act of courtesy was the occasion of our conversing together. We conversed in French; at length I could no longer forbear, and began to speak Polish. My companion for the first moment looked astonished, but before long it was as if we had known each other for twenty years. She told me how she had suffered in Poland, and that she was now on her way from Posen, where her brother had died of his wounds. She told me that before she set out for Posen she had given her housekeeper commands, in case the French or the Swedes should come, to place her dwelling at their disposal. I gave her the hope that before very long she might have to fling garlands to those victorious allied armies in Warsaw.

It was about ten at night when we entered the station at Warsaw.

But now the carriage doors were beset with gendarmes and our passports taken from us, after which we were shut up in the waiting-room. A young engine-driver was taken into

custody by a soldier because he wore a blouse. While waiting for our passports, we were all questioned by the commissariat as to whence we came, and whither we should go on leaving Warsaw, how long we meant to stay in each place, and where we should lodge. Each of us then received, instead of his passport, a ticket by which to reclaim it the day before his departure, on application to the police. A second ticket permitted each of us, for this once, to proceed to our lodgings without a lantern.

I was on my guard, spoke French or German, and acted the part of a foreigner, as indeed I had done during my stay in Cracow. My nationality was not suspected.

We were now released, and conveyed into the city by the omnibus belonging to the Hôtel de l'Europe.

All the streets were deserted. Here and there a patrol was stationed before a closed gate. We only met mounted Cossacks, who looked savagely at us. I alighted at the Hôtel de l'Europe, which is fitted up in the style of the Grand Hôtel in Paris, but of its three hundred apartments there were only twenty occupied. Within a very few weeks it was converted into barracks.

It was in front of the castle at Warsaw that the Poles were slaughtered by the soldiery in April and October, 1861.

"What is it that you demand?" inquired the now deceased Prince Gortschakoff, brother to the present Russian minister of foreign affairs.

"A fatherland," replied they.

"Fire upon the rebels!" was his command. And men, women, and children were shot down by hundreds, and immediately thrown into the river.

In the Saxon Square, in front of a garden of the same name, stands a monument erected by the Emperor Nicholas to the memory of the Poles who, having in 1831 betrayed the national cause, were shot down by their countrymen and hanged. The monument is of bronze, in the form of a square obelisk, on each side of the granite pedestal of which rest two bronze lions. The inscription, which is in both Polish and Russian, says: "In memory of the Poles who fell from fidelity to their monarch."

I used to pass this monument every day when I was a boy on my way to school: I and my comrades regarded it with scorn. Among the names inscribed upon it is that of Count Hanke. This nobleman left two sons, one of whom, a colonel in the Russian service, is now intendant of the fire brigade, and administrator of the theatre. The second son of Count Hanke was a man of truly noble and chivalric exterior, who gained all hearts at the court of St. Petersburg. Although on terms of intimacy with the imperial family, by whom he was brought up and indulgently treated, he gave up all as soon as the flag of national insurrection was raised in his native land, took the field against her oppressors, and fell, one of the first victims of Muscovite cruelty. The post of the director of theatrical affairs is not particularly onerous at this time, because scarcely a Polish foot has, for the last two years, crossed the threshold of a theatre. Probably my reader may remember the Russian edict that every official who, on receiving a ticket from the police for the theatre, failed to be present with his family, should be removed from his post. This was when the Grand-Duke Constantine arrived at Warsaw; and the government might have removed every Polish official, for they could not force any to visit the theatre. Representations are now given three times in the week, at which only Russian officers and soldiers and their respective wives are present. I know an actor who lost his only son at Miechow; but, for all that, he was compelled, during his time of sorrow, to take his regular part at the theatre. Since Nicholas ascended the throne, the stage has been especially devoted to vaudevilles, operas, and ballets. Dramas and tragedies taken from the national or foreign literature are wholly unknown to the people. This is a part of the system which forbids public instruction, and would drive the whole nation to sensual pleasure in order the more easily to subdue it. Literature declines more and more; talent of every kind is banished to the icy deserts of Siberia, or to the mountains of the Caucasus. The censor, by his signature, is responsible for printed matter, and but for him the citadel would be filled with authors and newspaper writers. Yet, spite of the censor's responsibility, many persons are imprisoned for the words that he has licensed. In the year 1854, when Ahn's method of teaching French was introduced, the following two extracts were discovered: "Un roi doit aimer son peuple;" and immediately afterwards, "Un chien doit fidelité à son maître." These two sentences, in spite of the censor's prohibition, were by some oversight printed in the work. By order of government, the whole edition, three thousand copies, was burned.

On the day after my arrival at Warsaw, I saw with horror to what height the fury of barbarian despotism can rise.

I was in the eating-room of the Hôtel de l'Europe, which lies about two hundred paces from the street in which the Zamoyski Palace stands. A report, reminding me of the Orsini shot which I heard at the opera in Paris in 1858, sent all the guests at once from the room. Three people in the street had made an attempt on the life of Berg. I rushed to the scene of action. A mounted Cossack flew past me at full speed to bring up a troop which were in the Saxon market, and a few minutes afterwards these came at a hand gallop. The street was closed, and a crowd of people collected behind the soldiers. On the street lay two dead horses. Steam and the smoke of gunpowder choked the air. An officer ordered the soldiers to force their way into one of the houses. Many female faces, pale as death, were seen at the windows, and cast bewildered looks into the street below, where soldiers were driving back the spectators with the butt-ends of their muskets, shopmen were actively putting up the shutters to secure their places of business, of which there were twelve in this house—among others, that of

Krupecki, an immense dealer in fancy goods and colonial wares, and especially well known in Warsaw as selling sugar at the lowest price in the city.

Within half an hour after the military entered the house, an officer from a window in the first story ordered the street to be cleared of people. Then down came panes of glass, then window-frames, and immediately afterwards a wardrobe from the third story; this was a sign for the work of destruction to begin. Furniture was hurled out from all the windows; five grand pianos among other articles, one belonging to the Polish composer, Chopin, and in the possession of his sister, who resided here. A nursemaid, who, on the outbreak of this disorder, seemed to lose her wits, ran away, leaving behind her the child committed to her care. The family was from home. Shortly afterwards recovering her senses, she returned to the house and endeavoured to enter, but she was driven back by the muskets, and cried bitterly. A few minutes later a cradle was flung from the window, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, a child was in it; next followed a bookcase; and then all were burned in a confused heap.

Within the house all the men were forcibly driven out of their dwellings in the various stories, to the halls on the ground floor; but the women were prevented from following them, and then began horrors that cannot be described. Two women killed themselves, to escape outrage. I saw at the fourth window of the third story a young lady seized by two soldiers, her clothes torn and her neck bleeding; she was forced back into the room. The shrieks she sent forth, sound yet in my ears. An old gentleman was standing at my side; tears flowed from his eyes, and he stammered time after time, "Jesus! Maria! help us!" The flames blazed up aloft, and with their fiery tongues licked the walls of the Church of the Cross. The fire brigade rushed to the spot, but were immediately dismissed by the colonel in command. Cossacks sprang hither and thither, and began to drive the people to the right and left with their whips. I could scarcely keep myself on my feet, and returned to the hotel. On my way, I met the troop of artillery hastening to the Zamoyski Palace, but its destruction was deferred, in consequence of a command from St. Petersburg.

This was what they called divine vengeance. When the retribution for *our* wrongs comes, woe to the Muscovite tyrants!

The day after this outrage, a dragoon standing by the Church of the Cross sold one string of pearls after another for two silver roubles each. From the Countess Branicka alone, jewels to the value of 300,000 roubles were taken. On the same day, however, the colonel who, during the plundering, permitted such horrors to take place, was condemned by the national tribunal, and the sentence was immediately executed. The following morning he was no longer among the living.

The Belvedere is the summer residence of the Russian governor. Here Constantine, the uncle of the present grand-duke of that name, lived, and here many a tragedy was enacted which remained unknown to the public. Yet who does not shudder as he remembers the old Pole, before whose eyes his dishonoured daughter destroyed herself, when he had sought for and found her in the chamber of Constantine! The old man, who went mad at the sight, took the corpse on his back, and, running through the city, called aloud for vengeance. Here, two years since, that same Prince Gortschakoff who commanded the people before the castle to be fired upon, died a horrible death. Everywhere he beheld the forms of women clothed in mourning, and blood-stained phantoms. Swearing an oath that the command for the horrible slaughter did not proceed from him, he died in violent and appalling convulsions.

The Belvedere is surrounded by a beautiful English park, but no one now visits its alleys or its gardens. As in William Tell's time, every one must uncover his head before the grand-duke and his wife, or run the risk of imprisonment. The Poles never place themselves in a position where they may encounter the pro-consul. The grand-duke himself arrested any who did not salute him. On the day he left, the grand-duchess, on her way to the station, met two monks of the Capuchin order who did not salute her, because they had on their capuches. She ordered the carriage to stop, and commanded a policeman to bring up the two Capuchin brothers, and, thinking that one of them did not look like a monk, she ordered him to prison. Very probably he is by this time in Siberia.

The Senate-house stands in the middle of the city; it is a large building, in which not only the commercial government has its seat, but the police its bureaus and prisons. From the latter were sent during the first months of last year no fewer than fourteen thousand five hundred prisoners. In other portions of the same building are magnificent rooms, in which the city formerly celebrated its festivities. One division of the fire brigade is stationed in one of the inner courts. There have been erected in various parts of Warsaw, as in St. Petersburg and Moscow, lofty towers in which a fire-watch is on guard, who, by the ringing of a bell, give notice of the outbreak of fire, when the engines are immediately despatched to the scene of conflagration. This is the only good measure introduced by Russian organisation. The firemen in Warsaw consist solely of Poles, and this is an acknowledgment of the intelligent courage they show in the hour of danger. In the lower story of the Senate-house the Commission of Taxes sits, the work of which is entirely performed by soldiers. The revenue of the Russian government, as well in Russia as in Poland, is derived, for the most part, from the farming or leasing out of the brandy excise, which in Russia brings in three-sevenths of the whole collective revenue. The farmers or lessees of the brandy excise have the right of establishing as many public-houses as they please, and fixing the legal price of brandy

as high as they please. Every one has the right to sell spirits, but there must be paid to the lessee an immense excise. The brandy lessees Utin, in St. Petersburg, and Janatch, in Warsaw, have both become millionnaires. The brandy excise has apparently been abolished, but it exists factitiously, and the management of it has passed into the hands of the Russian officials—Tchinovinks, or Russian locusts.

There are in Poland a vast number of sources of revenue, showing the barbarian mode of government. As an example, take the *day-ticket*, a tax laid upon the Jews; every Israelite is compelled to pay from fifteen to twenty kopecks a day if he goes on a journey or enters another town than that in which he resides. Foreign Jews are also subjected to this impost. Thus, when Rachel came to Warsaw, she was negotiating with the director of the theatre on the subject of giving some representation, when one of the police entered her lodgings and demanded head-money. An hour afterwards she left the city. The lottery is another demoralising source of revenue, which returns a million and a half to the Russian military treasury, after deduction for an immense amount of peculation. The only regular source of revenue is that derived from tobacco; but it is difficult to explain why people should be forbidden to smoke out of doors. The punishment for the first offence is fine, and imprisonment for the second.

Beside the theatre stands the post-house, which extends into the Cracow suburb. From here the diligences start. For the present, the letter-post is under the management of the police: every letter being opened, and then daubed together again without ceremony. In this condition I found a letter which awaited me at Warsaw. Deceit is now the rule; and the revenue from letters is diminished by three-fourths. The city post, in fact, was almost annihilated whilst Muchanow was minister. One day he received about a thousand letters, in which was merely the single word *miau*, written to indicate cat-music.

The cathedral of Poland stands in a narrow street. It is rich in old monuments, and possessed of some fine pictures. In consequence of the sorrow of the church, the altar is now hung with black. The bells are never rung, and no festival is celebrated. And all this is observed by the whole Polish nation as by common consent.

Of the immediate object of my journey to Warsaw I have already spoken; secondary to which I determined, if possible, to obtain some information regarding the three young Swedes who had voluntarily entered the insurgent army. On the second day of my being in Warsaw, I presented myself to my superior, whom I had already informed of my arrival by means of the organisation. Among other business, I communicated to him certain matters of importance, the decision upon which required the consent of the National Government. My superior undertook to lay these before the national council of the interior, by whom they would be submitted to the supreme council. Once satisfied that these important matters were in proper train, I was at liberty to take available steps on behalf of the captive Swedes. My plan of action was simple. I would present myself as a Swede to the English consul, and request his co-operation. Two days after the Zamoyski tragedy, I set off to call at the British Consulate, which is situated in the alley. Scarcely had I entered this beautiful promenade, when I saw a gentleman in a French hat advancing towards me. A moment's reflection convinced me that this could be no other than the consul himself, because no Pole would wear a cylindrical hat, or be otherwise than in mourning. At all events, I was sure it was an Englishman, and as we met, I said, "Can you direct me, sir, to the English consular-house?"

"I myself am the English consul," he replied. "In what can I serve you?"

I related the object of my journey to Warsaw, as regarded the Swedes. The consul heard me with attention, and taking paper and pencil from his pocket, handed them to me, saying, "Write me the names of your three countrymen. It will be necessary for those Russian generals whom I know, and from whom I may make inquiries. Come to me early in the morning, and you shall have your answer."

He left me in a cheerful state of mind. I continued my way to the Belvedere, and he went on towards the town.

On my return, I found a man waiting for me. He brought me a letter from the National Minister of the Interior, informing me that the general council had, on the previous day, favourably received and considered my proposals; that they had been immediately submitted to the supreme council; and that it now merely remained for me to await their reply.

I felt so happy that I hardly knew what to do next. Had I been in Paris or Stockholm I should have taken a carriage and driven round the Champs Elysées, or to the Djurgard, but here the wisest thing was patiently to confine myself to a promenade in my own room. In the afternoon I went out to buy a book, and chance led me to the publisher of the Polish translations of Fredrika Bremer's and Andersen's works. Scarcely had I, in conversation with the shopman, mentioned my false nationality, than he was immediately sent by his principal to fetch ten volumes, the works of my highly esteemed friends, in the Polish tongue, which I was requested to convey to their authors in Stockholm and Copenhagen. It was indeed an agreeable day for me, and in order to celebrate it fitly I bought a little lantern, with which I went into the streets after sunset; I soon returned home, however, because I was unwilling to risk the going out of the little light. I had, at first, the intention of going to a coffee-house and looking through the newspapers, but then I remembered the police regulation, which forbids any one to remain in a public place for more than ten minutes, and threatens any breach of this law with deportation.

In the streets I ran against a guard at almost every step. By half-past seven they were almost empty; by eight there was only a belated person here and there hurrying homeward.

Next morning I went again to the English consul according to agreement. A French servant received and announced me. The consul came at once, and told me in the most amiable manner that he had requested Mr. White, the vice-consul, to take all necessary steps towards ascertaining the present residence of my countrymen.

Having been courteously received by the vice-consul, I went to the Senate-house. But, before doing so, in order to guard against treachery, I burned every paper which might in the least degree have been evidence against me. Witkowski was sitting in council, but he came the moment he was informed that a gentleman from the English consul wished to speak to him. I was standing in a large hall, where at least a hundred of the police and other servants were curiously observing me. How easily might some one among them recognise me!

There came up to me a little sallow-complexioned man of about forty, with cold cruel eyes, dressed in a general's uniform, scattered over with every possible Russian star. It was Witkowski. He took the letter from my hand, read it, and desired me to call at his house next morning.

I passed the long line of police, and breathed more freely in the open air. I next wrote a letter to Mr. von Richenberg, the Prussian consul, who replied that he would see me that same evening. I went to him accordingly; two soldiers and one of the police were walking backwards and forwards before the house. Accompanied by the policeman, I reached the door; a servant opened it, inquired my name, and again shut it in my face.

Having obtained audience, as soon as I had made the Prussian consul acquainted with the object of my visit, he burst forth into violent accusations against Sweden: not so much from his own standpoint as a Prussian, but as if he had been a genuine Russian indignant at the sympathy which the Swedes had expressed towards the Poles. "This," he said, is a city of assassins; there are none but rascals in this place. The Russian government will, however, for the future, pursue another course. It has hitherto been too mild." Finally, as I was about leaving his presence, he said, "I know everything which passes in Warsaw, and I indeed pay for it."

I let him talk, and left him with the proud conviction on his mind that he was right, and that he did know everything. But all this did not advance my business one step. He evidently would not do anything for the poor Swedish youths. I observed the disfavour with which he regarded the subject, and finally discovered the cause. He had in the morning met the English consul, who confessed to him that he could do nothing for me, and that he had referred me to him.

The following morning I presented myself at the private dwelling of Witkowski. Two Cossacks stood as guard in the vestibule, where also were some unfortunates from the Zamoyski house. After waiting a short time I was conducted to the general. An official stood in the middle of the room, with a report in his hand; on the table lay a heap of papers and a cocked pistol. The slim little man, after he had assured me, with evident satisfaction, that he was president of the city of Warsaw, and no longer the head of the commission for the examination of prisoners, desired me to go to General Trepow, giving me at the same time one of his visiting cards, which would secure me an audience.

Trepow was but lately come from St. Petersburg to Warsaw, where he had previously held the office of head of the police, with forty thousand bayonets under his command. Nevertheless, not feeling himself safe, he had desired to be removed to Moscow. He it was who caused the last firing upon the people in Warsaw; on which occasion a Polish artisan, meeting the head of the police on foot, gave him a sound box on the ear. After this he was ill for some time, and then requested his removal from Warsaw.

At the house of Trepow I found an incomparably more numerous guard than at Witkowski's. But who can describe my suppressed amazement when I recognised in a policeman who kept guard at Trepow's door, the very man who had shortly before conveyed to me the resolution of the National Government!

I was passed between a double row of officers, every one of whom surveyed me with close scrutiny, but my demeanour was unmoved.

"General Witkowski has spoken to me of you; so has General Berg. He inquired who the private person was who dared to come hither to demand account from government."

By leading the conversation to the occurrences of the day, I succeeded in pacifying him.

"I have long since," said he, "told the emperor that things could not go on as they are; but he is much too good." Then, after a little pause, he continued: "I said to the emperor, 'Sire, if you will only allow me carte blanche, I will soon establish quiet in Poland.' At length the emperor conceded, but only to the general wish. All this confusion, however, might long since have been put an end to, if the emperor were not so kind-hearted."

In this agreeable manner Trepow talked for above an hour. I merely made now and then a little demur, which encouraged him to fresh outbursts. Finally, he drew up a little statement of what I wanted. Thus:

"The undersigned Swedish citizen has of his heart's desire alone come to Warsaw to inquire after three of his fellow-countrymen who are imprisoned in the citadel. Their names are Jacobsson, Unman, and Eriksson. The undersigned prays for the free release of these prisoners. "N. N."

Trepow was satisfied with me. I am convinced that I had been sent to him merely that he might subject my person to strict examination. I succeeded, however, in occupying his attention and turning it from myself. Thus it was I who had his mightiness under espial. I left him with a promise on his part to inform me where my three fellow-countrymen were to

be found. On leaving, I looked round for the policeman, but he was nowhere to be seen.

Later in the same day I received two letters, one of which was from Trepow, and was as follows: "The Swedes, Unman, Eriksson, and Jacobsson, have been proved political criminals, and by the sentence of court-martial are sent to the interior of Russia. They commenced this journey on the 17th of August of the present year. I hasten to communicate to you this intelligence. Herr N. N. Hôtel de l'Europe, No. 94."

The seal with which this letter was secured exhibited eight orders and medals, displayed on one ribbon.

The second letter was from the head of the national police, and contained a little strip of paper, on which was written in the Russian language:

"The bearer of this is" (here was a blank, which I filled with my name), "whom allow to see the citadel between the hours one and three.

"Given in Warsaw, Sep. 23, 1863.

"General, &c., Baron KORFF."

I was wonder-stricken at the power of our National Government organisation.

Somewhat before two o'clock I took a carriage and drove to the place, which, far worse than the Bastille, devoured hundreds more of victims than ever did that monument of French aristocratic activity. The day was fine, and all the streets were bathed in sunshine. The contrast between the glorious sunbeams and the gloomy scene it lighted up, unspeakably depressed me.

Before me was a drawbridge crowded with soldiers and women: the latter bringing little baskets of linen and food for the prisoners. My carriage drew up, and I alighted. A soldier received my Russian note, and handed it to an officer. I then waited ten minutes, and another note was given me, and the gates of the citadel were opened to me.

The intolerable stench which rises from every Russian military establishment poisons the air and causes sickness. A Russian officer was my conductor.

"Do you know my countrymen who are imprisoned here?"

"Oh yes, but one of them is dead;" he said this in the calmest and easiest way in the world; "and the two others are in the division No. 6, unless they went off with yesterday's transport."

I knew of a certainty, however, that the three Swedes had been sent to the interior of Russia. Probably the officer confused them with some imprisoned Italians.

"Sir," replied I, "if I cannot see them living, it may be possible, perhaps, to see the place where my poor countryman has found his last rest? There is, no doubt, a burial-ground here."

"Yes—yes—but——" replied the officer, with a smile; "however, come with me."

We passed through the citadel, along the fortress ditch, which extends by the river-side, meeting every moment some emaciated, pale, and suffering countenance. These figures were, one and all, in grey ragged overcoats. They were all Poles, and each was escorted by two soldiers. They were going, probably, to the examination commission, or returning from it. There was one man who, Heaven knows by what miracle, had obtained permission to rest for a moment in the warm sunshine. He lay extended on the grass, and was busied in tying up a little bouquet of the few poor flowers he could gather.

We came to one little court which led into another. This was the burial-place. I did not venture to enter, because I saw at a distance that they were throwing a neglected body into a wide-open grave. I had seen enough, and hurried away from the hideous spot. As we were passing one of the pavilions, a heart-piercing shriek was heard. My conductor would have hurried me on, but I stood still. It was the cry of a woman. And here the wives of our citizens—if by mere chance, as for instance, not having provided themselves with lanterns, they are imprisoned—may come under the lash as part of Russian prison discipline.

Whatever remains of happiness to Poland is now confined within the circle of domestic life. Persecuted, uneasy, surrounded everywhere by despairing sorrow, the Poles give themselves up, with all the more love and devotion, to domestic life. They consider it their mission to rear worthy citizens for the fatherland, and to give their children as good an education as may be, both as regards the affections and the intellect. This has been for many years the only occupation of men who despair of doing anything else for their cruelly oppressed country.

Secretly, and like a thief, I passed by my own old home, the house which still contained within its walls those who were dearest to me on earth. Silently I must pass it, and I cursed in my soul the oppressors who separate father from son, husband from wife. My mother heard from a lady of our acquaintance, who chanced to arrive by the same train, that I was in Warsaw. How can I tell what she suffered from this moment! "Go, my child, go!" was her salutation to me. "The anguish of knowing that you are here, has half killed me!" I went away without saying farewell to a single member of my family. If I could have gone and lain me down in my grave!—but no, I must live and work beside the grave wherein they seek to lay my living throbbing country. Next day I left Warsaw, passed the frontier safely, and proceeded, in the service of the National Committee, to Vienna.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE FIRST: CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXV. AT THE CORNER OF THE RUE DE RICHELIEU.

IT is a tall and stately house of many stories. Perhaps, by this time, they have pulled it down, and built up another palace more sumptuous on its site; but a quarter of a century since, it was lofty, and commanding, and imposing.

It had been a café, a restaurant, and a concert-room. Wax-work was shown there once, I fancy. It had been a toy-shop, and a shawl-shop, and an advertising tailor's. Once a court jeweller had it, and once a fashionable milliner. But it always bore its peculiar stamp of stateliness, and, at the worst of times, held on to its dignity bravely. It was always FRASCATI'S.

In the time when this history ran its course, this place was in the last throes of its splendid shameful existence as a gambling-house. The Maisons de Jeu, the scandal of France and in Europe, were moribund. The concession of a privilege for the holding of the public gaming-tables was in the hands of the municipality of the city, who derived a large annual revenue from the infamous concerns: a revenue which was, however, but a beggar's dole compared with the enormous profits of the Fermiers des Jeux, or lessees of the tables. To the credit of the Ædiles of Paris, all the dirty money they gathered off the green baize of Frascati's and similar haunts of madness and avarice, was applied to charitable purposes; but the government had grown tired and ashamed of this nefarious method of contributing to the poor rate, and had warned the municipality that the concession they granted soon after eighteen hundred and thirty must be the last. The banker (or gaming-table keeper), Benazet, had timely notice to remove his croupiers and macers, his rakes, and pricked cards, and was destined, with other birds of prey, to take flight to Baden and other congenial hells of Fatherland, and settle there to the perpetuation of plunder. But France was freed, at last, from these vultures.

The life thus remaining to Frascati's (for the Palais Royal tripots were shut up) was a short one, but its patrons and fomenters determined that it should be merry. To the accustomed frequenters of the establishment, suppers on an unheard-of scale of luxury were given every night in the cabinets adjoining the great gambling-rooms. Within a month of the dissolution of the gigantic swindle, the cornices were regilt, fresh chandeliers hung, and the windows veiled with fresh green velvet draperies. The affluence of strangers was tremendous. There never was known such a crowd of players, from eleven o'clock in the forenoon till eleven o'clock in the evening; for these dens were open by day as well as by night. The saloons were crowded with dandies, lawyers, politicians, journalists, artists, and foreigners of distinction, mingled with the common and unmistakable herd of shabby wan-faced fishy-eyed professional gamesters. People had to stake over each other's shoulders. Thousand-franc notes fluttered though the air, as hoarse voices directed their destination towards red or black, odd or even, under or over, number or colour, square or transversal column, or zero. The croupiers looked contemptuously upon the starveling wretches who played silver. It was as much as ever room could be made for the desperate throwsters who played rouleaux of golden louis. From chime to chime, right round the clock, were the chinking of the money, the sharp pattering of the cards as they fell from the banker's hands, the whirring of the roulette-wheel, the click of the ball, the rasping of the croupes as the forfeited stakes were gathered in, and the dull hoarse voices of the masters of the game crying out that red had won, or that thirty-five had turned up, black, even, and over—anon enjoining the gentlemen present to make their game, then telling them the game was made, and that no further stake could be received. A hundred times within an hour the lugubrious monotonous chant was audible. One seemed to be listening to the out-door litany of the Trappist: "Frère, il faut mourir."

Otherwise, there prevailed a deathly silence. Never was there so well-behaved a place as this superterranean pandemonium. It was accounted a flagrant breach of etiquette to make a noise under any circumstances—to rejoice loudly if you won, to lament audibly if you lost, to quarrel about a questionable throw, or even to converse in aught exceeding a discreet under tone. When you entered, a grave doorkeeper took from you your hat and stick, partly, it may be assumed, to ensure the preservation of good manners in so very aristocratic a saloon, partly to obviate the

possibility of any votary of the blind goddess (who sees much better athwart her bandage than we give her credit for), rendered desperate by a continuous run of ill-luck, flinging his hat violently at the dealer (as a speaker of the Irish House of Commons is said to have once flung his wig at the head of an orator who wouldn't leave off), or running a croupier through with a sword-cane. If acquaintances wished to chat, or to argue, they went into an ante-chamber, or into the supper-room. The solemn and powdered lacqueys who stole about with cards and pins for calculating punters (who, knowing every probability of the game save one, and, failing the knowledge of that, were beggared), appeared to glide in list slippers. The whole place wore a calm and peaceful aspect, most beautiful to the philosopher. There was no wailing, no gnashing of teeth, no tearing of hair, no stamping of feet. When human wickedness is concentrated on one particular object, and all its faculties are remorselessly perverted and bent, with diabolical strength of volition towards the attainment of one particular end, human wickedness is apt to be very quiet indeed. Guy Fawkes did not whistle at his work, you may be sure. The administration of strychnine is not a comic song.

It occurred one morning during this ultimate gala time, this "Vauxhall closing for ever" season of Frascati's, to two gentlemen, both known by name and character to the readers of this chronicle (although of one its sight and cognisance have been lost for a considerable period), to look in at the corner of the Rue de Richelieu and try their luck upon the red and the black.

One was a very old friend, and he had grown to be a very old man. It is nearly fourteen years since we last met him. His hair was still black, but it was the hair of a wig, and not of a living head. His whiskers were ragged and sparse, and these, together with a bristly moustache he had recently grown, were ill dyed, and the white showed athwart the purple, like cotton in a fraudulent fabric of silk. His teeth, which were wont to gleam so beautifully, were now only a few irregular broken and discoloured fangs. His face was haggard, yet unduly puffed and swollen about the jaws, and in many places blotched with purple. It was easy to detect, without turning down his eyelid or inhaling his breath, that he drank. He snuffed, too, in every place where he was not allowed to smoke. He had come to that age when a naughty old man wants every kind of stimulant, and rushes down-hill by half a dozen parallel roads. His attire was shabby and his linen cloudy; his trousers were patched, and the lustre on his hat was due, half to grease and half to the recent application of a wet brush. You could see the hole in his left boot, where he had inked his stocking to conceal the whiteness of the orifice. In one hand he dangled a dingy yellow glove, which had no fellow; from his dexter wrist dangled by a string, a loaded walking-stick, which was more like a bludgeon. But it would be unpardonable to omit the fact that he wore spurs, dimly lacquered, and that his frayed and eraseous stock was fastened with a sham carbuncle pin, price one franc twenty-five centimes in the Galerie Vivienne, and unavailable at the Mont de Piété.

This was all that was left of the fashionable Mr. Francis Blunt. The glories of the Horticultural fête, Gamridge's Hotel, the cabriolet and the tiger, the body-servant and the chambers in town, the watches, the rings, the scent and cambric, and the cut velvet waistcoats, had all come down to this. It would be wearisome to dwell on all the details of a career towards the dogs, which had continued with brief intermissions of prosperity for fourteen years. It would be sullying this page with the shabbiest and sorriest of chronicles. His instincts had always been canine, and the dogs had him at last. It was a natural culmination. It was only what might have been expected. Hundreds of spirits as dashing, as fashionable, as accomplished, had so subsided into decrepitude, and drifted into extinction. The brilliant butterfly had become the dirtiest of grubs again. He was but one of a motley, brilliant, worthless million.

But if you want the rapidest coup d'œil—the most comprehensive bird's-eye view—here it is. A thousand table d'hôte dinners (many of them on credit), and a thousand days passed outside cook-shops, with nothing to eat. Thousands of bottles of wine, some paid for, some to which he had been treated, many which he had cozened innkeepers out of. Much brandy, many cigars; hecatombs of card-packs, legions of billiard-matches, a sack full of loaded dice, a shower of stamped paper, bearing his name, now as drawer, now as acceptor, now as endorser. An occasional appearance in the English Insolvent Debtors' Court; one or two proclamations of outlawry; a ream of begging letters; a host of unpaid tailors; several bevies of bayadères, and worse; half a dozen convictions for escroquerie entailing lengthened residences in French, in Belgian, and in German jails; a few duels, more numerous canings and horsewhippings. Behold it all. He had ridden in carriages-and-four, and he had been kicked down stairs; he had danced at balls and run away from landlords; he had been drunken and gay, and sick and in hospitals; but the route had been always downward, and it had come to this at last. And, as the Sibyl enhanced day by day the price of her portentous volumes, while they were diminished in number, even so did Mr. Francis Blunt require every day more brandy, and derive a smaller amount of comfort from that down-hill cordial.

His circle of existence was narrowing. Mephistopheles' poodle was tracing more involved concentrics round him. The moral halter was tightening. He dared not show himself in London, in Brussels, at the German watering-places. Out of a dozen former friends whom he would meet by chance, not ten, not eleven, but just the whole dozen, would cut him. When his name was mentioned, it was not as "poor devil"

—he was beyond contemptuous charity—but as "horrible old scamp." The miserable man had no one to talk to now, but a few tavern waiters, gaming-house employés, dunning landladies, billiard-markers, police agents, and commissaries of police. His acquaintance with the two last-named classes was involuntary. The police were well aware of him. "Le nommé Blunt" was down in the blackest books of Rue de Jérusalem. He was too old and drunken to be made useful as a spy. The alguazils quietly waited until they could catch him in flagrant délit, and cart him off to the galleys as a robber. He had ceased to have a regular lodging, and slept by the night in the worst "garnis" of the worst quarters, at fifteen sous. When he had no money, he prowled about the Champs Elysées. When he won, he would have a drinking-bout at the wine-shops in the Halles which are kept open all night, and would be an insolent Amphitryon to market-gardeners and sergents de ville, who scoffed at him while they drank at his cost. But these festive evenings were rare. He had reached, to all appearance, that stage in the gambler career, when a man *never wins heavily*, and when Fortune permits him only to pick up sufficient from the green cloth to save him from sheer starvation, and enable him to support life while she tortures him. There were very few even tenth-rate cafés and estaminets, now, where he was welcome, or allowed to brawl and drivel over his brandy, or his absinthe. There is a phase in rascaldom when the rascal is even ostracised by his mates. Blunt had become a solitary rogue. "Mauvais garnement," cried the French raffs;" "A thorough rip," sneered the English raffs who knew him. So he was left alone.

"And yet," he would moan piteously to himself, sometimes, "I have a brother in India who must be worth millions. Where is he? How came he to leave the service? Is he dead? I have written hundreds of letters to him in vain. Where is George Blunt?"

There was one place, indeed, of which he was free—one hostelry open for twelve hours out of the twenty-four—one caravanserai where he could enter. So long as he had a hat and coat they would admit him to the gaming-tables. The line was drawn at caps and blouses. So long as hats were hats and coats coats they were reckoned as belonging to the "mise décente," and their wearers were entitled to be called, in gaming-house parlance, "Messieurs de la Galerie."

This precious Gentleman of the Gallery then, on the morning in question, went up the well-worn stairs of Frascati's, and surrendered his hat and stick to the janitor at the door who knew Blunt well, and was, indeed, an ancient punter, on whom, when utterly broken down, the administration had take compassion, and provided with a snug refuge for his declining days. He had seen men and cities, and knew all the folly of betting against the black, and all the madness of backing the red. And accordingly, once a month when his scanty wages were paid him, and he had a holiday, he very carefully backed the red and lost every sou at the gaming-table, and, next day, went back contentedly to take care of the hats and sticks.

A clean old gentleman in a shirt-frill, blue spectacles, nankeen pantaloons, and speckled grey stockings—the uncle in a vaudeville kind of gentleman—whispered behind his signet-ringed hand, as Blunt shambled towards the roulette-table, to a stately military made-up personage, with a tremendous spiked moustache, and the ribbons of half a dozen foreign orders at his button-hole:

"He was in luck yesterday. He backed the numbers, always putting a five-franc piece à cheval—on horseback. He must have won at least five louis. Had he been able to play gold instead of silver, he would have netted a hundred."

"He will back the same number, you will see, to-day, and lose," quoth the military personage, sententiously. "I am sick of seeing that old scoundrel. I long to behold him sitting between two gendarmes on the benches of the court of assize."

Neither the clean old gentleman nor the military personage ever risked so much as a five-franc piece at the tables. It was strictly against their orders to play. Their business was to watch those who gambled; and there were others there, whose business it was to watch them. Both were spies of the police. But when the toils of the day were over, and they were off duty, the police gentry, and some select acquaintances among the croupiers, and the liveried lacqueys (whose services were perfunctory, and who were no more real footmen than the "greencoats" of the playhouse), would adjourn to a quiet wine-shop and gamble away their leisure hours in comfort and joy.

Blunt played from noon till four o'clock. Superstitious, as all gamblers are, he had dreamed, on three successive nights, that thirty-three was to be his lucky number at roulette. Understand, that, had he put a piece of money, or a bank-note on this number, and, when the ball had ceased revolving in the wheel, the number thirty-three, where it had halted, been proclaimed, he would have received thirty-five times his stake. But there were, of course, no less than six-and-thirty chances against him; and, his dream notwithstanding, his capital was too small (he had three louis left after a night at the Halle) to risk even the smallest amount "en plein," or in full, on the number. He put his stakes on horseback: that is to say, on the yellow boundary line between the square numbered thirty-three, and the square numbered thirty-four: so that, according to the rules, if either of those numbers turned up, he was entitled to receive half thirty-five, or seventeen times his stake. Sometimes he shifted his piece, and put it, still on horseback, between thirty-three and thirty-two, thus doubling his chances of winning. Oh! he was cunning.

He began with a five-franc piece; won a little,

lost a little; abstained from playing during a few rounds; then kept his hand in by staking on red, on black, on odd, or on even; then went back to the charmed square of thirty-three, and put ten francs on horseback. The wheel went round and the ball jarred from compartment to compartment. "TRENTE-TROIS, noir, pair et passe," cried the banker.

With a rake the croupiers propelled towards the gamester seventeen times his stake, a hundred and seventy francs.

He drew the money together, separated two louis from it, crammed the rest into his breast-pocket, and placed it in the same position. Then the game was made, and the brass pillar was twirled, and the ball went whizzing round.

"TRENTE-QUATRE, rouge impair et manque," cried the banker.

It being thirty-four, and the stake being entitled to share in half the gains in either number, they pushed seventeen times forty francs towards Blunt. He was now the possessor of four hundred and fifty francs.

He had not had so much money for months. He calculated that he could spend a hundred francs in a riotous night, keep fifty francs for eating and drinking, for emergencies, and still have a floating capital of three hundred francs, which, properly divided, would enable him to play for a whole week. To many gamesters of Mr. Blunt's calibre, who were watching his game, the same calculation presented itself. But, to the surprise of his neighbours, he never touched the four hundred and fifty francs. It was in gold, and he let the pile remain between thirty-three and thirty-four. He shut his eyes, and screwed the lids close together. He folded his arms, and dug his nails into the palms of his hands. He felt that the back of his head was burning hot, and that his feet were icy cold. He gnawed his lips, and awaited the issue.

The pillar was twirled; the ball rushed round in mad gyration. Blunt heard it hopping up and down, to and fro, from the outer to the inner rim. Then its march was feebler; then it stopped. Then there was silence; and a voice like the sound of a trumpet came and smote him on the ear.

"TRENTE-TROIS," it said, "noir, pair et passe."

It was thirty-three. He had won seven thousand six hundred and fifty francs.

"By Jove!" cried a voice, in English, behind him; "and I've been backing that confounded thirty-two in full instead of on horseback, and have lost every sou."

Blunt turned round and saw a young gentleman, very handsome, very bold-looking, and very fashionably dressed.

"We are countrymen, it seems," the gamester remarked, trying to muster up what he could of the ancient affable amenity of Francis Blunt, Esquire.

The young gentleman gave a haughty stare, and no direct answer.

"You're in luck, old gentleman," he condescended to observe.

"I am. Why didn't you back my luck? Are you so rare a punter as not to be up to that chance?"

"I wasn't thinking about it. I was intent on my own cursed number. And now I have lost all."

Blunt had withdrawn his winnings at the end of the round, while he conversed with his neighbour, as most experienced gamblers will do, as a measure of precaution, and sometimes even before they use their handkerchief, or take a pinch of snuff, lest an unexpected bleeding at the nose, or even a sudden fit of sneezing or coughing, should render them incapable of watching the chances of the game.

Francis Blunt, Esquire, had never in his most prosperous period been addicted to giving away money, or even to paying it when it was due. "Frank does not like parting with the shiners," was the verdict passed in sporting circles on his disposition to be tenacious of current cash. He would sow his acceptances at three months broadcast, but it was difficult to get a sovereign out of him. It is, however, one of the many superstitions of gamblers that luck may be conciliated by giving a piece of gold to a player who has just lost his last stake. The recipient of this bounty should be young, and preferably a woman, but ladies were excluded from Frascati's. Discipline must be preserved, even among the devils.

"And so you have lost all," Blunt said. He had not played for four rounds.

"Not a liard."

The old punter had seven thousand six hundred and fifty francs. He could afford to be liberal. He took five louis from his breast-pocket, and placed them in the young man's hand.

"Accept this loan," he said, omitting, not through delicacy, but through avarice, to call it a gift. "When you have won a hundred louis you can return it to me. But I advise you to back my luck."

The young man stared, hesitated, reddened slightly, passed his white fingers through his hair in a confused manner, then held out his hand and *took the money*.

"I can give it you back presently, you know, old gentleman," he stammered.

Yes; Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt took the money. He reddened, stammered, hesitated; but he took the money. Have you never been told that inveterate gambling has an inevitable tendency to harden the human heart, and to destroy in the gamester every sense of shame? Out of a gaming-house, Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt would have disdained to touch this shameful old creature's money. He looked like a beggar-man. But inside Frascati's, Mr. Greyfaunt was very glad indeed to accept it. He was young yet, you see, but after another year's apprenticeship even the blush, the stammer, and the hesitation, would have disappeared.

Blunt went on playing. He soon forgot all about the person to whom he had been so un-

wonted a benefactor. Nor did Mr. Greyfaunt preserve a long or a lively remembrance of his benefactor. "I'm not going to back the old rascal's luck," he said, candidly, to himself. "He'll lose his head presently, and be cleaned out." So, as soon as he conveniently could, the grateful Mr. Greyfaunt slipped away with his five louis, and wandered away to the trente-et-quarante-table.

At three o'clock that afternoon the broken bankrupt, Francis Blunt, had won fifty thousand francs.

"I'll be a gentleman again," he chuckled to himself. "I wonder where that rascal Constant is. He'd be glad to shave and dress me again if I paid him the money I owed him. I'll find out my daughter and make a lady of her. I've got fifty thousand francs. That's two thousand pounds. By G— I'll break the bank before I've done with them."

He had been playing without any intermission, save his brief converse with Greyfaunt, since eleven o'clock. After four hours' gaming he felt faint. Stuffing his winnings, which, as his stakes had grown larger, had been gradually converted into notes, into his pocket, he went out to the restaurant attached to the establishment. He swallowed some soup and ate a cutlet, ordered a bottle of champagne, and drank the whole of it; then ordered a decanter of brandy, and drank the better part of that, too. The meat and drink warmed the cockles of his old heart, and made him feel braver in his rapacious intent. "I shall win a hundred thousand before eleven o'clock," he muttered. "A hundred, bah! Two hundred thousand. My hand's in. My luck's hot. I wish it was the bones, though, instead of that child's play of roulette."

Toadies suddenly started up around him. Dilapidated raffs, almost as greasy and as ragged as himself, but who that very morning had avoided his company as though it had been contagious, came and claimed acquaintance with him. They clapped him on the back, and congratulated him. He grinned, and bade them the rather congratulate the luck, since to that alone he was indebted for their society. But he was in a bounteous mood, and treated them plenteously. They would have borrowed money of him, but he had done enough in the way of pecuniary generosity. "As much brandy as you like," he said, "but not a centime."

He rose at about five, remarking that he would have another turn at the tables. He was, that afternoon, the lion of Frascati's, and a crowd followed him with eager eyes. He felt his head swimming and his legs trembling under him. He called for some soda-water, but there was none; there was only some insipid eau de Seltz, of which he took a draught, with some brandy. Then, evading his admirers for a moment, he slipped aside into a side-room, where the innocent games of chess and draughts—for Frascati's liked to keep up appearances—were supposed to be played, and which was consequently always empty. He drew a card-table to the door, knowing that at least he should have fair warning if attempts were made to open it, and, sitting down, proceeded to pull off one of his boots. It was the fellow to the boot which had the hole in it disclosing the inked stocking. He flattened a thousand franc note down into the toe, and put on the boot again, and rose up with a leer.

"If the worst come to the worst," he thought, "we have this to fall back upon."

By seven o'clock he had won in all a hundred and fifty thousand francs, but he had made at least half a dozen dives into the restaurant and drunk more brandy. More than once the croupier had to remind him that he had left a bank note, unclaimed, on the table. He let money drop and refused to pick it up. He flung about his money recklessly; now on one stake, now on the other. But he kept on winning, winning, winning. He was drunk.

The largest stake allowed at Frascati's was twenty-five thousand francs—a thousand pounds. He put down this sum in twenty-five notes of a thousand on the red. Black turned up, and his twenty-five thousand francs were swept away.

He gave a tipsy yell, and said that he didn't care, and put down twenty-five thousand more, on the same colour. Again black turned up, and he had lost fifty thousand francs.

"He has lost his head," whispered the clean-looking old gentleman.

"It is the beginning of the end," the military personage said.

Half an hour afterwards, of all his winnings, Blunt had just one thousand francs left. The crowd were as absorbed in interest to see him lose, as they had been during the afternoon to see him win. The press around him was enormous. Some mounted on the benches at the back of the saloon to have a better view. He was still the lion of Frascati's, but a lion in the toils, a lion encompassed by the hunters, a lion at bay.

To his drunken memory it suddenly occurred that all his winnings had been made by betting on the numbers. But a long period had elapsed since he had abandoned his faithful thirty-three. He cast his last thousand franc note to a croupier, and told him to put it on "thirty-three."

"En plein ou à cheval—in full or on horseback?" asked the croupier.

"In full; may as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb," stuttered Blunt, now very far gone.

The gallery were amazed at the desperation of the stake, for he admitted it to be his last. One friendly voice was raised to warn him against his peril.

"Put on five hundred! Cry out five hundred à la masse!" urged the voice, which belonged to a poor broken-down captain of the Grande Armée.

"Won't," mumbled Blunt. "Let it come up as it likes."

"At least put a louis, in case of accident, on zero. Zero hasn't been up for ninety rounds."

"Haven't got a louis left."

"Well, here is one," said the poor broken-

down captain. "You're so drunk and so desperate, that something tells me that thirty-three or zero will turn up."

Blunt took the proffered louis, and tried, as steadily as he could, to roll it on end towards the compartment marked zero, which is close to the outer circumference of the wheel, in the middle of the table. But his aim, accurate enough when sober, failed him now. The coin stopped at the compartment marked "four," oscillated, and fell flat.

"For zero?" a croupier said inquiringly. He was close to the louis, and would have gently propelled it with his rake towards the designated spot; but Blunt, with a screech, forbade him.

"Let it be there," he said. "The devil will take care of his own."

"A thousand francs on thirty-three, and a single louis on zero," whispered the clean old gentleman; "the fellow must be mad. Any way he must lose."

The pillar revolved, the ball whizzed round and stopped. Then the banker called out:

"ZERO."

The rakes gathered in Blunt's thousand franc note and the poor broken-down captain's louis. He did not care to ask his debtor when he would repay him. Justice Shallow had, perhaps, about as good a chance of being repaid the thousand pounds which Sir John Falstaff owed him. The poor broken-down captain was a philosopher. All he said was this:

"The imbecile! Why did he not insure on zero as I told him? At least thirty-five louis would have been saved out of the wreck, and some capital would have been left for future operations."

Blunt was too old a hand to fall beneath the table in a fit, to tear his hair, or to beat his breast. He staggered away to the buffet, and asked the waiter to let him have a glass of brandy on credit. The superintendent nodded assent, and they gave him the liquor. He had lost so very largely as to be entitled to that trifling pourboire. Frascati had some bowels of compassion.

"Besides," he said, as he drained the glass, "it's only for a little time. I shall pay presently. There's a fellow in the room owes me five louis. Has anybody seen him? A handsome fellow with curly hair."

He had reached that stage of intoxication not uncommon with habitual topers, when an additional glass of liquor rather sobers than stupifies. Blunt felt, for a moment, himself again. The lacqueys kept a keen eye upon him to turn him out (now that he was ruined) if he attempted to create a disturbance; but he went very composedly to and fro and up and down, from the roulette to the trente-et-quarante, seeking for the fellow who owed him five louis.

He found the fellow at last. Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt's face was flushed and his eyes were sparkling. A pile of notes and gold was before him. He was winning largely.

"Hallo! old gentleman," he cried, as Blunt came up with pendent lip and bloodshot eyes. "Cleaned out, I suppose?"

"Ay!"

"Ah! you backed your luck a little too often. You'd better have been contented with a little. What a lot you were winning, to be sure. Stop! don't I owe you five louis? Here they are. And oblige me by going to another table, and playing by yourself, for, if you back *my* luck, it's sure to turn, and I shall lose."

Blunt thrust the money in his pocket, and turned on his heel in dudgeon. The young man's voice and manner seemed to him inexpressibly insolent. He skulked to the roulette-table, and changed his five pieces of gold into twenty pieces of five francs each. He wished to protract his agony as long as possible.

He played cautiously, timidly, nervously—eschewing the numbers altogether, waiting sometimes for a dozen rounds before there appeared what he deemed a favourable chance, shifting his paltry stakes, now to red, now to black, now to odd, now to even, now to over, now to under. At one time he had scraped together some sixty or seventy francs; but luck again departed from him, and, as the clock struck ten, he had lost the last of his five louis.

He found out Edgar Greyfaunt again, who, still winning, was absorbed in the game. Blunt jogged his elbow.

"I am cleaned out again," he pleaded humbly. "When you were too, I lent you five louis, and those I have had back, and spent. Lend me ten louis now, for Heaven's sake. There is only another hour left to play. Let me have one more chance."

"Go to the deuce!" cried Edgar Greyfaunt, pettishly, as he gathered in a handful of louis he had won.

"Only five louis, then," urged the miserable old man. "Make it five louis, for mercy's sake, and you shall have them back in five minutes. I didn't wait to be asked when I lent you the money."

"The more fool you," Mr. Greyfaunt coolly responded. "Don't bother me! You're making me play, all at sixes and sevens. Stop! here's a five-franc piece. It will get you a bed, and some breakfast in the morning."

The ancient spirit of Francis Blunt, Esquire—the remembrance that he had once been a gentleman—rose for a single moment, and chased away the miasma of misery, the fumes of brandy and tobacco, which hung about him as a mantle. By a mechanical movement, he clutched at the proffered dole, but, lifting his shaking hand, he flung it at the head of Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt, accompanying the act by a storm of fierce invective addressed to that young gentleman.

The beggared gamester was speedily seized round the body by two of the powdered footmen. It was intolerable that the decorous conduct of so important a game as trente-et-quarante should be interrupted by the frenzied violence of this tattered and disreputable person. The entrance of the saloons must be

henceforward interdicted to him. Monsieur the Commissary of Police said as much. The commissary came forward, unbuttoned his waistcoat, and showed his tricolored scarf beneath. To the powdered footmen he threw the significant words "A la porte!" So it was to the door with him. Turn him out! Send him packing! There was some little scuffling and scraping along the floor, and there was some little snarling and sputtering, as he was half-dragged, half-pushed through the sumptuous saloons he was to behold never more. A few of the players turned, looked, shrugged their shoulders, grinned, took snuff, and went on backing the red or the black. They got Blunt out without much difficulty, though he kicked a good deal, and tried to bite one of the lacqueys. They bundled him down stairs, and flung his hat after him: detaining his stick as a lethal weapon capable of working mischief.

"And thank your stars, my brave," remarked the footman who gave him his final shove into the Rue de Richelieu, "that we do not send for the sergents de ville, and have you taken to the nearest post. I think you would be grateful, even for a bed at the guard-house."

"Curse you!" cried the wretched old man, gathering up all his sobriety and all his strength. "Curse you and your thieving crew! Take that!" And he hit out—he had been a bruiser in his youth—and caught the menial cleverly under the jaw.

The Frenchman, to whom kicking and caning were tangible entities, but who did not understand fisticuffs, set up a dismal yell; but before he had recovered himself sufficiently to cry "A la garde! à la garde!" Blunt had staggered away, and was beyond pursuit.

The miserable old fellow was haunted by a vague impression that he had some money about him somewhere; but in what place he tried, desperately, vainly, to remember. He turned out his pockets, and pulling off his hat, searched the lining. But his efforts were fruitless. He began to cry, and was a sorry sight to see.

DEBT.

The greatest curse of this land is not, as some imagine drink, but debt. There are many persons in a position to declare that, among all their acquaintances, they do not know a drunkard. I believe, however, there is not one who does not know several persons who are in debt, and who suffer great misery in consequence. In whatever rank of society you move, from the very highest down to the very lowest, you cannot live long without becoming acquainted with men and women who are a trouble to themselves, and to their friends, through owing money. So completely does insolvency pervade society, that those who are not in debt are almost as much victims to the consequences as those who are. What does it avail me that I pay on the nail for everything, and owe no man anything, when I have relatives, and friends, and acquaintances who are in debt to every one with whom they deal? They come and carry off the money I have saved by my prudence and economy; they come and vex my heart with distresses, which, in my own case, I have taken infinite pains to avoid. They make their debts my debts, and their troubles my troubles. I might almost as well have incurred debt and trouble for myself.

I have lost all patience with these people, and I intend now to read them a lecture. I trust it may do them good.

To begin with, then: The great majority of them are persons who have no business to be in debt at all. I make no doubt whatever that the credit system is essential to the conduct of wholesale business, that the great commercial machine could not get on without it. But I am sure that its extension to the minor dealings of society is the source of a vast amount of misery and wretchedness, that can in no way be attributed to the freaks of fortune, or the chances of life. There are many excuses for the failure of a merchant, liable to the fluctuations and losses incidental to trade; there is every excuse for the insolvency of a man with an inadequate salary, and an intolerably large family. But there is no excuse whatever for the thousands of middle-class people, with fixed incomes of considerable amount, who are constantly in debt and difficulty, and who only manage to scramble through life by making compromises with their creditors, by "going through the court," or by evading their liabilities altogether. It is among this moderately well-to-do middle class that the greatest amount of embarrassment is to be found, and it mainly arises from the indolent and thoughtless habit—for it is nothing but a habit—of obtaining goods upon credit.

It may be laid down as a principle, that the man who takes credit and the man who gives it both place themselves at a disadvantage. You are in debt to your butcher, and, as a consequence, the butcher is in debt to the salesman. The butcher sues you and the salesman sues the butcher. You are both in a mess, both unhappy. A ready-money transaction would have saved both of you. The butcher would have got more for his money, and so would you. Every one who is accustomed to pay on the nail is aware that he gets his goods considerably cheaper than those who take credit. A loaf of bread bought and paid for at the counter costs, say sixpence-halfpenny. If it be put down in the book it is charged a penny or twopence more. Ready money also commands a choice, and full weight, which credit does not. There is, perhaps, no great choice in loaves; but there is great variety in sirloins of beef and legs of mutton. If you run a bill with a butcher he sends you what he likes, charges you smartly for credit, and possibly takes advantage of you in the matter of weight. Perhaps you are a very genteel person, and consider it beneath your dignity to go about to butchers and bakers chaffering for joints of meat and loaves of bread. Well, if your income be

over three hundred a year, you are possibly in a position to indulge your gentility; but if it be anything under that amount, you cannot afford to be genteel at so heavy a cost. Every income, whatever may be its amount, requires careful management. It is just as easy to get into debt and difficulty with a few thousands a year as with a few hundreds. Perhaps the safest position is that of the man who earns two or three pounds a week. His income is so small that no one will trust him, and so he is obliged to buy his goods as he wants them, and pay for them with ready money. This person cannot live genteely, but by management he gets enough to eat and drink, and is never troubled with duns and creditors. By avoiding credit, a man may live and support a family upon a hundred a year without getting into debt. By taking credit, he will be in debt with ten thousand a year.

It is a very simple matter. Credit never permits a man to know the real value of money, nor to have full control over his affairs. It presents all his expenses in the aggregate and not in detail. Every one has more or less of the miser's love of money—of the actual gold pieces and the crisp bank-notes. Now, if you have these things in your pocket, you see them, as you make your purchases, visibly diminishing under your eyes. The lessening heap cries to you to stop. You would like to buy this, that, and the other; but you know exactly how much money you have left, and that if you go on buying more things your purse will soon be empty. You do not see this when you take credit. You give your orders freely, without thought or calculation; and when the day of payment comes, you find that you have overrun the constable.

The honest and the dishonest, the careful and the reckless, all fall victims to this snare. They begin life by owing, and they never know what it is to have direct control over their means. The consequence is, that they are utterly without a guide to the scale by which they ought to live. People who owe instead of paying for what they require, invariably pitch that scale too high. Let us take the case of a man with three hundred a year. Being a gentleman born and bred, and married to a lady, he considers it necessary that he should have a genteel house. Now, in London you cannot get a house with any pretensions to gentility for less than sixty pounds a year. Well, perhaps a man with three hundred a year can afford to pay sixty pounds for his house. But how seldom does he reckon that the actual sum he will have to pay, including rates and taxes, is close upon eighty pounds? Then comes the furnishing. The young man, seeing that other persons with the same means as himself have well-appointed houses, at once proceeds to furnish his residence from kitchen to attic, on credit. I say on credit, for if he were possessed of the necessary money, he would wait and furnish it by degrees. He now commences life as a householder, keeps a cook and a housemaid, runs bills with all his tradespeople, maintains a genteel establishment, gives little parties, and lives happily—for three months. At the end of that time bills tumble in upon him, and he finds that their united amount is considerably more than his quarter's salary. If his creditors press him, he is driven to borrow money at ruinous interest; and so he is fairly launched upon a career of misery. And all for the want of the commonest prudence. Three hundred a year is a salary upon which a family may live comfortably; but not luxuriously. It will not admit of ad libitum expenditure; it must be nursed, and managed, and watched. A man with this amount of salary ought not to pay more than sixty pounds a year for house-rent, including taxes, and he ought to purchase his furniture by degrees. He has no business to set up as a full-blown householder in a moment. If he can manage to complete his furnishing in two or three years, he will do very well. In any case he cannot afford to pay a premium of five-and-twenty or thirty per cent on every stick he buys. On the contrary, it is necessary that he should get everything at the very cheapest. This is only to be done by paying ready money, and ready money is only to be got by living for a year or two within one's income. Everything in nature grows by degrees—everything but the human donkey, which tries to be a magnificent animal, as like a lion as possible, in a minute. Let me enumerate a few things which a man cannot afford to do with an income of no more than three hundred a year. He cannot afford two servants; he cannot afford to give set parties; he cannot afford three courses and a dessert every day; and, as a broad rule, he cannot afford to take three months' credit from his tradespeople. Two servants will cost him at the very least sixty pounds a year, an amount entirely out of proportion to his means. Then that three course and a dessert business is the very type of a mockery, a delusion, and a snare. It may be said that a plate of soup does not cost much; that a bit of fish is an inexpensive luxury; that a pudding is a very simple viand. That, perhaps, is true, of each of these dishes separately; but collectively, as forming the daily bill of fare in a small establishment, they will be found to come very costly. At an eating-house you can get a basin of soup for a shilling, or a plate of salmon or turbot for the same amount. But you cannot make a shilling's worth of soup at home; you cannot buy a shilling's worth of salmon. A dinner of this kind cooked for two persons will cost at the very least three shillings a head. Six shillings a day for dinners, to say nothing of the consumption and waste below stairs, on a salary of less than a pound a day! No; clearly this will not do. The stern fact must be faced; there must be a good deal of plain but substantial boiled beef and roast mutton, occasionally cold, about the dinners in a three hundred a year establishment. Better is a dinner of herbs with love, than the stalled ox and contention therewith. Better cold mutton and pickles now and then with independence, than three courses

and dessert with duns besieging your gate. People do not really care about these dinners. When Paterfamilias is in the City he will dine off a chop and be satisfied; but at home he must do the grand. It is a mere habit with some; with others it is ostentation and pretence. Besides, life is not all for meat and drink. Banyan days are good for the health; the occasional fast gives zest to the periodical feast.

Parties are madness. More people are ruined by parties than by anything else. A three hundred a year establishment cannot afford to call in the confectioner more than once a year. Indeed, I doubt if it can bear up against that expensive administrator at all. If you have a grand party of this kind, with an ornamental supper, and wine and waiters, you cannot do much less than the man who counts his income by thousands. Your guests eat and drink as much as his guests, and you cannot offer them cheap pheasants and cheap champagne. The great error which people with small incomes commit, is in thinking that they are bound to do the same as their friends and neighbours. What nonsense this is! Smith and Jones mix in society on the same footing because they are both gentlemen, but if Smith has a thousand a year and Jones three hundred, is it reasonable that Jones should be expected to give as grand parties as Smith? It is not reasonable. No one expects it; and when Jones gives his grand parties, the guests roll home in their carriages and speculate upon their host's speedy bankruptcy. But there is a kind of party-giving practised by humble folks, which, though very unpretending, is quite as expensive. You will hear modest householders say, "Drop in any evening and smoke a pipe with me; I don't pretend to give wine, and that sort of thing, but I can offer you a bit of supper and a glass of grog." Drop in any time, according to invitation, and you will find half a dozen fellows smoking pipes and drinking humble gin-and-water. But gin, though humble, costs money, and half a dozen fellows will drink a lot of it, and they generally stay to supper and drink more gin; and the humble party costs the host a pound at the very least. He can't afford it. He wouldn't do it if he had to put his hand in his pocket for the money every time a bottle of gin is wanted. But he takes credit, and has only to send for it. You think me a shabby fellow because I don't keep open house in the same fashion. Very well; have that opinion; but I promise you I will not get into debt and come and borrow money of you. Your liberal friend will, and you might as well pay him for his entertainment at the time. I don't say that a man ought not to give parties. Parties are very pleasant when everything is paid for, and you can afford to give them; but a man with three hundred a year can afford to entertain his friends only when he has the spare cash in his purse to defray the expense. It is bad enough to take credit for the necessaries of life; but to run a bill for champagne and trifle is an offence that merits whipping.

A select committee of noblemen's stewards assembled, not very long ago, to furnish estimates of the expense of keeping up a first-rate establishment in first-rate style. They all hit close to the same mark; one mentioned forty-two thousand, another forty-five, and another—this being the highest—forty-seven thousand. It was eventually agreed that a nobleman could live in first-rate style, keep his town and country houses, his horses and hounds, and entertain his friends magnificently, for forty-five thousand pounds a year, provided—there was a proviso even in this case—provided that the *income were carefully and prudently managed.* The stewards would not answer for the consequences if their masters went to work recklessly, spending right and left, and indulging their fancies without regard to the limit prescribed by their means. The truth is, that every income, whatever its amount, whether three hundred or forty-five thousand, requires to be managed with care and prudence. Everything is in degree. Tastes and habits advance with the amount of income, and the man who lives above his three hundred will find it just as easy to live above forty thousand. Extravagance can always find a way of indulging itself; recklessness will squander even millions. As a rule, however, noblemen with thousands a year are much more careful than the little people with a few hundreds. In many great houses there is a steward, or an accountant, who makes out the bills every month, and at regular intervals places a balance-sheet of assets and expenditure before his master. This steward is very often a privileged person, who will not scruple to tell my lord and my lady that they are going too fast, that they must forego certain pleasures, live more quietly, and retrench. It is generally the small people who live without check or control. And among all the small people there is no more aggravating instance of extravagance and unthrift than that of the man who, with an income varying from eight hundred to a thousand a year, is always needy, always borrowing money, always involved with Jew bill-discounters and sheriffs' officers. The thousand a year people seem to be the most unfortunate of all: they are always in a mess. There must be something particularly awkward about the sum. Judging from all I have seen, it is both too little and too much. I imagine the case to be this:—when a man's income is under a thousand, he is content with a genteel house at sixty pounds a year and two or three female servants; when it reaches a thousand, he feels himself justified in taking a mansion and setting up a man-servant and a carriage. Now, in London, a thousand a year won't bear this. It won't pay for the flash and show attendant upon livery servants and a carriage. As a rule, if a man with a thousand a year give outward indications in his dress and habits of being above the ordinary run of people you meet in the streets, you may be sure he is overrunning the constable. A thousand a year, to be really comfortable and well off, must walk a good deal, ride a good deal on the top of the

omnibus, and be content with champagne dinners and a box at the Opera as an occasional treat. It may be laid down as a rule, that a thousand a year cannot afford to pay more than a hundred a year for rent and taxes. In London there is no graduated scale of houses to suit incomes that vary only by a hundred or so. A thousand a year does not justify a better house than five hundred. There is nothing between the moderately genteel residence and the female servants, and the mansion involving a carriage and footmen.

It used to be said that fools built houses and wise men lived in them. But this was a proverb of our ancestors, who made haste gently in the matter of living. Now-a-days landlords and tenants are all fools together. Not long ago I observed the tax-gatherer proceeding on his rounds. I watched him through a whole street in a genteel region, and I am certain, by the momentary stay he made at each door, that he did not receive the taxes at a single house. I thought it extremely probable that the landlords had not received their rents. The whole system is rotten to the core. On every hand we see people living on credit, putting off pay-day to the last, making in the end some desperate effort, either by begging or borrowing, to scrape the money together, and then struggling on again, with the canker of care eating at their hearts, to the inevitable goal of bankruptcy. If people would only make a push at the beginning instead of the end, they would save themselves all this misery. The great secret of being solvent, and well-to-do, and comfortable, is to get ahead of your expenses. Eat and drink this month what you earned last month: not what you are going to earn next month. There are, no doubt, many persons so unfortunately situated that they can never accomplish this. No man can guard against ill health; no man can ensure himself a well-conducted helpful family, or a permanent income. There will always be people who cannot help their misfortunes. But, as a rule, these unfortunates are far less trouble to society than those in a better position who bring their misfortunes upon themselves by deliberate recklessness and extravagance. You may help a poor honest struggling man to some purpose. But the utmost you can do for an unthrift is thrown away. You give him money you have earned by hard labour and saved by self-denial and economy, and he spends it in pleasures which you have never permitted yourself to enjoy.

A measure is proposed by the Lord Chancellor, the direct object of which may be said to be—to make people thrifty by Act of Parliament. It is possible that it may have some effect in controlling the reckless practices of tradesmen, who, having no dread of the Court of Bankruptcy before their eyes, are ever anxious to force credit upon customers on the mere chance of payment; it may afford some protection to poor debtors against the ruthless operation of the law directed by unscrupulous and rapacious creditors; but it will never compel people to live within their means—that is to say, it will never teach common prudence and common honesty.

The great marvel is that so many people should deliberately choose to be miserable when they might just as easily be happy. It is the greatest mistake in the world to suppose that pleasure must be expensive. It is nothing of the kind. The best pleasures, those which sweeten life most, and leave no bitterness behind, are cheap pleasures. What greater pleasures can a man enjoy than the sense of being free and independent? The man with his fine house, his glittering carriage, and his rich banquets, for which he is in debt, is a slave, a prisoner, for ever dragging his chain behind him through all the grandeur of the false world in which he moves. I will go out this morning with the consciousness that I owe no man anything, that even the bright day is earned and paid for, and I will walk to Highgate, and, being weary, and hungry, and athirst, I will enter a wayside inn and feast upon bread and cheese, washing it down with a mug of ale, and there will be no pleasure superior to mine in all Christendom.

SUMMER IN THE CITY.

A STRANGE wan lustre dwells upon that brow,
To me sad presage of diviner things;
As though the angels hovered round my love,
And graced her with the twilight of their wings:
Yet would I fain behold more earthly light
Within those azure eyes so weirdly bright.

A silent music plays about her face,
A strange sweet melody that hath no sound;
And I stand mournfully like one who seeks
In tears the precincts of cathedral ground,
And listens to the harmony within,
Himself debarred by consciousness of sin.

O for one day beyond the city's gloom!
To wean my little one again to earth,
To bring a homely smile to that pure face,
To light those azure eyes with cheerful mirth!
O Heaven forgive me, but I curse my fate,
That this I cannot do until too late!

Afar I know the chesnuts are in flower,
Bearing their minarets of milky white;
The soft laburnums droop their yellow flames,
The hawthorn fills the warm air with delight;
While o'er the meadows shifting shadows fly,
And trees stand black against the blinding sky.

Then in the even, when the great soft moon
Sails slowly up the liquid azure deeps,
Until it grows in gold, and in the dark
And lustrous purple ever calmly sleeps,
Lo! the lone nightingale his love outpours
To charm the silence of the starry hours!

Those crowds of happy faces hastening home
Stab me with impotence and vain regret!
I see them kiss their wives and little ones,
Far out beyond the city's noise and fret:
My little one, more beautiful than they,
Is bound within this prison night and day.

O hapless lot! O error oft repented!
The heedless haste of fond romantic youth!
Why will she smile on me, and look contented,
Why not arise and scorn me without ruth?
O Heaven! she, weeping, clings unto my breast,
And says that there alone she findeth rest!

Dear little one, such love and constancy,
Shall surely never go without reward;
For God is good, and angels oft are given
To be on earth, for earth, a watchful guard:
I only know I fear, and fearing think
My love too near the lone eternal brink.

JEBEL USDUM AND THE DEAD SEA.

I WAS in Palestine in the spring of the year 1863, with a party of four friends. Our first object, in common with most travellers who visit that country, had been to see Jerusalem and its environs. But we were unwilling at once after this to adopt the usual course and proceed on our way to Damascus. We had already accomplished the ordinary excursion to the Jordan and the north of the Dead Sea; and it was our wish, ere leaving the neighbourhood, to see something more of this celebrated lake, for both its eastern and western shores are well known to possess far greater attractions than the part of the coast we had visited, although an expedition to them is seldom included in a tour through the Holy Land. The reason of this is that they can never be explored without considerable difficulty and even danger, while at times the warlike state of the Bedouin tribes in those regions, renders the journey utterly impracticable.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, we determined to make every effort to reach the great salt ridge called Jebel Usdum, on the south-western shore of the sea, and thence to make our way along the west coast to Sebbeh and Ain Jidy.

On our first arrival at Jerusalem we had inquired the names of the several tribes through whose territories we should have to pass, and learned that between Hebron, Jebel Usdum, and Ain Jidy, the country belonged to the Jehâlîn Arabs; while the Ta'amirah were lords of the soil from Ain Jidy to Bethlehem. These tribes were on friendly terms, so that an escort from the one could protect us through the possessions of the other. Mr. Bergheim, banker at Jerusalem, to whose kindness we are indebted for much of the profit and pleasure of our stay in the Holy City, undertook the management of the affair, and endeavoured to procure the necessary guard from the Ta'amirah. In doing this, his first difficulty was to ascertain the whereabouts of the Sheikh. The movements of a Bedouin prince are never made public by court circular, and there are times when he sees fit to keep them unusually secret. It was on one of these occasions that we sought the services of the Ta'amirah chief. Some of his tribe had lately committed a murder, and the Turkish government was therefore anxious to discover his abode. He naturally viewed this anxiety with apprehension, and thought it prudent for the time to be neither seen nor heard of in Jerusalem. Mr. Bergheim, however, succeeded in communicating with him; but his demand for furnishing an escort was three thousand piastres, a larger sum than we felt inclined to give. As he refused to lower his price, a Turkish guard was suggested; but we were told that it was positively dangerous to travel through the Bedouin territory under the protection of the Sultan's soldiers; their presence only exasperates the Arabs, with whom they are on the worst of terms. Affairs were in this condition, when our dragoman at length came to us with the pleasing intelligence that Abu Dahûk, chief of the Jehâlîn, was willing to escort us for eight hundred piastres. Having assured ourselves that he was in a position to fulfil the terms of agreement which he proposed, a contract was signed and sealed in the presence of the English consul, between our party and Sheikh Hamsa, the chieftain's agent at Jerusalem.

The form of the contract may prove of service to other travellers. At any rate, it had the effect of causing the Sheikhs to bestir themselves to the utmost, for their own sakes, in the hour of need.

CONTRACT:

1. Sheikh Hamsa Abu Zarou engages with Lord A——, Mr. B——, Mr. C—— F——, Mr. N—— S——, and Mr. G—— C——, to escort them to Bethlehem, Hebron, Jebel Usdum, Sebbeh, and Ain Jidy, for the sum of eight hundred piastres, four hundred of which shall be paid in advance, the remaining four hundred on the safe return of the above-named gentlemen to Jerusalem.

2. The Sheikh further engages to pay fourfold of the value of any article of property belonging to the above-named gentlemen, provided that it be lost by robbery.

3. In case of any dispute arising as to the terms of the contract, it shall be settled by the British consul at Jerusalem.

British Consulate for Palestine, at
Jerusalem, April 4th, 1863.

Signed on behalf of ourselves
and party of friends.
{ N. D. J. S.
{ C. T. W. F.

○

Seal of Sheikh Hamsa
Abu Zarou.

Attestation, &c.

We left Jerusalem on the afternoon of April 5th, and on reaching Bethlehem encamped for the night, choosing a most picturesque spot amidst some fine old olives, in a valley to the south of the ridge whereon the village is built. The next morning, we turned our horses' heads in the direction of Hebron, when an hour's ride brought us to the pools of Solomon. After passing these, the path leads across wild and uncultivated hills, covered with brushwood; and it was not till the afternoon that we entered a more fertile region, and found ourselves on the ancient road which runs towards the south through the Vale of Eshcol. On either side of us were terraced slopes clothed with vineyards still kept with the greatest care.

We were now approaching Hebron, the highest of the cities on the Palestine range, and situated on the east of the valley down which we had been riding. A gently sloping plain opens out before it to the west, and on this our tents were already pitched; but we could not yet dismount, for it was an object to see the city, as well as the tree called Abraham's Oak,

that day, as an early start would be requisite on the morrow. We therefore rode out of the dell for about a mile to the north-west, following a path enclosed between stone walls, where we left our horses and walked a short distance to the oak. Beneath the boughs sat a party of sullen Mohammedans, and amongst them a Mogrebbin, or dervish from Morocco, who seemed to be the guardian of the sacred tree. They did not attempt to interfere with us so long as we were all together; but when in a few minutes my four friends returned to the horses, leaving me engaged in gathering some acorns, my right arm was suddenly seized from behind by the infuriate black, who with a pickaxe raised aloft was preparing to strike me down. The rage of the fanatic seemed to know no bounds; he could not endure that an infidel should thus desecrate the tree under which the great patriarch, El Khulil, had pitched his tent. I had not an instant to lose, but wrenching myself from the man's grasp, I drew my revolver. This weapon is held in peculiar awe by all the uncivilised classes in Palestine, and its close proximity to the ruffians (for my first assailant was supported by his companions) caused them to fall back and stand at bay. The speedy return of my friends put an end to the adventure.

The morning of April 7th at Hebron will long be remembered by us. As we looked out of our tent, the sun was rising over the hills to the east, lighting up the time-honoured walls of the Haram. Clustered around this, lay the little white-domed houses of the city, and from its gates were being driven forth herds of goats, to browse on the very hills where once fed the flocks of the patriarchs. Everything reminded us of those days, indeed we seemed to be living in them. The dew was still glistening on the grass, when, mounted on a good Syrian mare followed by her foal, came the grey-haired Bedouin Sheikh, our guide, a long Arab lance in his hand, and a stout Damascus broad-sword by his side. His dress was very picturesque—he wore a long garment of striped silk, surmounted by a black and white camel's hair abba; on his head, the usual silk Kefîyeh, which with red boots completed the costume. The horse also was an interesting study: its saddle was peaked before and behind, an arrangement which causes the unpractised rider to imagine himself seated between the prongs of a pitchfork; the stirrups were remarkably short, the foot resting in a sort of scale pan; while the bit was calculated, without careful use, to amputate the horse's lower jaw—a touch of the rein being sufficient to bring the animal on its haunches. The shoes were simple sheets of iron. Abu Dahûk was accompanied by Sheikh Hamsa and five Jehâlîn warriors. His professions of friendship were unbounded—he kissed our hands, and raised them to his forehead, displaying, besides, every token of good will. Our dragoman and he embraced in true Oriental fashion. When the introductions were complete, we invited him to smoke, and drink coffee. It was pleasing, meantime, to see the respect in which he was held by the Arabs around, who were eager to tell us of his large flocks and possessions.

We were soon in the saddle and on our way southward along the path which leads over the hills of Carmel, where Abigail met David as he went up to take vengeance on the churlish Nabal. There is scarcely a rougher road in Palestine; the horses had literally to scramble over the rocks, and the baggage was with difficulty kept on the mules. Till about mid-day we continued to ascend; and when an hour later we halted to rest and refresh ourselves, we must, I think, have reached nearly the loftiest part of the Judæan wilderness, some four thousand five hundred feet above the level of the Dead Sea.

While at luncheon, we were entertained by the arrival of a caravan from Petra, which stopped for the camels to browse on the grass growing luxuriantly for a short distance around. To procure food for the beasts was not the only object of this delay on the part of the Arabs; they had also an eye to their own refreshment upon the remnants of our luncheon. As soon as we had finished, they arranged themselves for the repast according to desert fashion. Bending their legs beneath them in a form which none but practised limbs could assume, they squatted in a circle, and, being joined by the two Sheikhs of our party, commenced the most scrupulously just division of the food, which it is needless to say was devoured without the assistance of knives and forks. The meal was no sooner over than the caravan prepared to move on its way. Each man sprang upon the back of his camel as it lay meekly on the ground, and the animal, well knowing that its time for rest had ended, in an instant raised itself on its hind-legs with a jerk which would inevitably have hurled an inexperienced rider some yards over its head: another plunge, calculated to produce like evil results, only in an opposite direction, and the beast was on its fore-legs also, ready to continue the march. We were not long in following the example of the Arabs.

The path now led down some deep ravines. The rocks ceased, and the scenery reminded us of English downs. Here and there were large flocks of storks, affording capital practice for our revolvers. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon when we espied ahead the well-known black tents of a Bedouin encampment. Putting spurs to our horses, we galloped into a large open square bounded by the habitations of the Jehâlîn, where, to our unspeakable dismay, the muleteers, who had been sent forward, as usual, with the baggage, were pitching the tents. The space was filled with screaming children and yelping dogs; while, aroused by this unwonted uproar, lazy Arabs issued from their respective tents to gaze in sleepy wonderment at the strange arrival. With a few exceptions, their faces wore an expression of sullen stupidity, brightened by an occasional look of extreme maliciousness. These looks would doubtless have led to unpleasant results, if it had not been for the presence of Abu Dahûk, who sat smoking,

surrounded by the elders, in the principal tent of the encampment. We found that the Jehâlîn had compelled our men to stop, probably with the intention of pilfering; and although they used every argument to induce us to remain for the night, we gave orders for an immediate start, nor were the mules again unladen until the noise of the Jehâlîn camp had given place to the stillness of the desert.

The bird's-eye view over the wilderness below, was magnificent. For miles to the south of the lake, and the sea itself, as far as the northern extremity of the peninsula, were stretched out in panoramic grandeur at our feet. The view was closed on the east, beyond the waters of the lake, by the gigantic wall of the Moab Mountains, which appeared but a short distance off, though in reality a ride of four or five hours was before us ere even the western shore could be reached. The nature of the intervening ground causes this deception. It possesses no marked features, no difference of colour, but consists of a series of grey hills moulded into every conceivable shape. There is nothing on which to fix the eye for the purpose of forming an estimate of distance. Over this vast expanse of country there were signs of vegetation in two places only: on the far side of the peninsula before mentioned, and along the east of the vale to the south of the lake, where it was observed in considerable quantities. With the exception of these fertile tracts, a sterile waste lay before us. Nor was the view towards the south more inviting. There, the eye wandered over barren hills, till it rested in the far distance on desert plains bounded by gathering mist. An angry and threatening sky completed the desolation of the scene.

A rapid descent over slippery rocks was now commenced. We dismounted, and led the horses as best we could, finding great difficulty at times in keeping clear of them, for they slipped with the loose stones, and we were encumbered with boots and spurs. At last, by a process of sliding and scrambling, the bottom of the cliff was reached, but several times the baggage-mules rolled over, and it was all our indefatigable muleteers could do to set them on their legs again. For another two hours and a half we continued to descend, riding at times along the bed of some dry water-course, or crossing hills on which grew a few chance and meagre shrubs, withered by the heat of the sun.

At about eleven o'clock on the following morning, we halted for luncheon under the boughs of a solitary shittim-tree. The rain, which had long threatened, now commenced in good earnest. Meanwhile, the two Sheikhs rode on and soon fell in with the scout who had been sent forward in the morning. He reported that he had reached the well at the foot of the mountains, where we were hoping soon to gain a supply of water, and that he had seen some strange Bedouin about the place, who, he imagined, were in considerable numbers. Abu Dahûk at once returned to us with this intelligence, and warned us to keep together; telling us that it would be necessary to discover the name of the tribe, before the descent to the well was made. Accordingly we remounted, and soon overtook the baggage. For the next thirty minutes the path led us over bare limestone rocks, rendered doubly slippery by the heavy rain. It was plain enough that the Jehâlîn suspected danger, as they rounded each rock with their guns ready to be levelled. Thus we reached the top of another precipitous descent of several hundred feet, where the Sheikh bade us halt till the escort preceded us into the Wady Zuweirah, through which our path lay, and where the Bedouin had been seen. We were now standing on the slopes of a vast mountain amphitheatre. Below us, about a mile to the front and just visible beyond intervening masses of rock, lay a stony plain dotted over with shittim and acacia trees, and washed by the waters of the lake. The rocks between us and the plain were separated from the mountain wall on the left by the Wady, which narrows towards the bottom into a defile, leading straight out of the wilderness to the shores of the Dead Sea.

We anxiously watched the progress of our men along this ravine. At no time could we distinguish more than five figures, although we afterwards learned that they met with a band of about seventy Bedouin, who thought it prudent for the present to keep out of our sight. These assured the escort that they would offer no resistance to our safe passage, and ratified their promise, as is usual on such occasions, by inviting them to smoke. It seemed that they had come from the neighbourhood of Gaza, and were on their way to plunder Kerak, a city to the east of the Dead Sea. Their party consisted of el-Osman, Maaza, and Tihâyâh Arabs.

Our escort signalled to us from below that we might venture to descend, so that we made our way down the terrible path without any apprehension of danger. On reaching the well at the bottom we dismounted, and let our weary animals quench their thirst. They had last drank on the afternoon of the previous day. One of the Bedouin, who was found sitting by the well, asked for powder and shot; but, on being refused, at once took himself off, probably to report on our numbers. Our inability, however, to understand the language, left us at the time in utter ignorance of many of the facts with which we afterwards became acquainted.

We had been seated by the cistern at the head of the ravine for some few minutes, drinking the water, when B——, who had walked on, was seen returning round the rock in front, closely followed by thirty-five or forty cut-throat-looking Bedouin. Each carried a bludgeon, a dagger, and a matchlock, the fuses of which were alight. Their countenances betokened great exultation at having thus trapped us, and their savage appearance was still further increased by their wild costume.

We at once sprang into our saddles; but the path behind us was already secured to prevent retreat. We moved forward a few yards, and

getting in single file along a narrow ledge of rock where it was almost impossible to turn, some of the robbers began to cut the baggage from the mules to the rear. The Jehâlîn went manfully to work at once to rescue our property, and thus the fighting became serious and general. The mules in front were stopped; and, in the course of a few moments, a blow from the butt-end of a gun laid the head muleteer prostrate on the ground, while another of our men was stabbed for refusing to give up his money. Our servant, Mohammed, was stripped to the skin, and two of the mules were rolled over in the confusion. There was no doubt now as to what we might expect: still our dragoman and Sheikh Hamsa besought us to keep aloof, and above all, to abstain from firing; our only chance, they said, was to leave everything in the hands of the old Jehâlîn chief, who seated himself on a rock above us, and with characteristic coolness lighted his tchibouque. He waved his hand to the robbers to take what they pleased, vowing that he would come down upon their country with his whole tribe and avenge his honour by exacting a hundredfold. Considering the inferiority of our numbers, he evidently dismissed all hope of extricating us except by virtue of his influence. Meanwhile, the plunder to the front had enticed nearly all the Bedouin in that direction, and we were left free to ride back a few yards to some elevated ground beneath the fort, whence we obtained a less disturbed view of the scene.

We had agreed that if the influence of Abu Dahûk failed, to let our baggage be taken, as what we had with us was of little value, and only to use our revolvers in case of personal violence. The fighting continued for fully an hour; our brave escort did their very best, offering a hopeless resistance to the plunder. More than once we thought a dagger-thrust must have told: but although swords were clashed and stones hurled, not a single mortal wound was received or inflicted, otherwise the spirit of blood revenge would have sacrificed us all. Unfortunately, we scarcely knew our friends from our foes. All the Arabs wore nearly the same costume, and we had not thought to notice the men of our escort particularly. As we stood on the raised ground before mentioned, slightly removed from the strife, three Arabs rushed up to us. One of them seized my double-barrelled gun, which was loaded, and tried to drag it from the dragoman's hands, at the same time holding a dagger to his heart. The other two stood ready to assist their comrade. I happened to be next to them, and foolishly drew my revolver, determined to shoot the ruffian in case he stabbed our man. The gun, however, was wisely yielded, although the scoundrel took it down into the fight below, and levelled it at us, but it was snatched from him by young Dahûk. Meanwhile the two Sheikhs had done their work — the one by expostulating, the other by cool demeanour. Twelve or fourteen of the Bedouin were seen to congregate in the path above us, preparatory, as we thought, to an attack upon ourselves. At last, they came down and surprised us by explaining that some of the band were prepared to desist from the robbery, and to give up the names of those who refused to acquiesce in this measure. They had been informed, they said, that we were five powerful pashas from England, and that our tribe would avenge us, not only by depriving them of their flocks and possessions, but by exterminating them as a people; therefore they were willing to assist our men in recovering the booty which had been taken. This was the reward of our temperate policy.

The effect of this extraordinary good fortune will be easily understood. Everything was now to our hearts' content. By far the greater part of the Bedouin soon joined our side, and such as continued obstinate were compelled to restore the booty. The caves and the rocks around all yielded up their hidden treasure. It was intense amusement to watch the scene. Sheikh Hamsa exercised marvellous skill in taming many refractory Arabs. He warned, entreated, soothed, and finally embraced his subject. Throwing the left arm around him in such a way as effectually to secure both his hands, he buried the right among the folds of his shirt, and brought out from thence article after article, as the conjuror does from a hat.

The leaders of the Bedouin seemed determined to enforce full restoration, in order to satisfy Dahûk, and even fired on such of their men as refused to submit. When, therefore, we left the place, after some two hours' delay, we had not lost more than a few pounds' worth of property; and except that all our bedding was wet through (for the rain had never ceased), and that our water-skins had been overturned, neither ourselves nor our men had experienced any serious harm. The result of the encounter may prove of service to other travellers by confirming what is generally said, that the only chance of safety in case of an attack from Bedouin robbers, very superior in numbers, is to refrain from bloodshed till the last moment. Robbery, not murder, is the object; and unless a personal attack be made, it is madness to use firearms.

The afternoon was considerably advanced before we were again under march. In a few minutes we reached the mouth of the Wady Zuweirah, which opens on the north of the plain already mentioned. Here we separated from our baggage, leaving the men and mules to turn northward along the shore till they reached a fitting spot to encamp for the night. We ourselves prepared to ride in the opposite direction, for there lay the Jebel Usdum, a section of which was now plainly visible. We rode along smartly across the plain—a mass of shingle covered with bushes—which is left by the mountains retreating in the form of a semicircle for some distance from the lake. After riding for about a mile and a half, we passed a deep cavernous pit, and then rapidly approached Jebel Usdum, which joins the southern boundary of the plain. Thence to

the south of the lake, the shore is a long and narrow strip between the mountain and the sea. In a few minutes more we reached an angle in the cliffs, where the beach cannot be more than thirty yards in width. Here is a mound of stones, evidently the débris of some work of man.* When we had passed this, the view to the front was again hidden by a projecting rock some half mile distant; but our attention was now engaged by the long range of salt cliffs on our right. At its foot lay huge detached blocks of salt, dark layers of which, in the heights above, were to be seen alternating with beds of limestone.

The Jebel Usdum is a saddle-backed ridge some four hundred feet in height, and about five miles in length. On the eastern side, facing the sea, the cliffs are steep and abrupt, but on the west the ridge is only separated by a considerable depression from the wilderness of Judæa, as we had observed whilst crossing the plain to the north.

The cliffs and the coast soon curved considerably to the east, the former now appearing to terminate at a distance of about three miles. Immediately before this point is a cave, where we halted to rest. I happened to ride on, and was surprised to find that the ridge does not end there, but strikes away to the S.S.W., extending for some distance, although with a gradual depression towards the plain. On rounding these rocks the sense of silence and solitude was most profound.

Here, at the extreme south-west corner of the lake, is a marshy bay composed of sloppy salt, and presenting the appearance of half-thawed snow, but of a pinkish hue.

Leaving the cave, we retraced our steps as quickly as possible to the mouth of the Wady, where we had been robbed. After passing this, there was just sufficient light left to enable us to notice three distinct lines of beach, which were again observed at intervals before we reached Ain Jidy. The highest is about fifty feet above the lake. Continuing our ride along the foot of the mountains for another hour and a half, the camp-fire was at length espied on some bold cliffs overhanging the lake. But it seemed as though we should never reach it, for the place had been well chosen; being inaccessible except by the precipitous path we had to follow, and by a similar one from the other side.

That night there was only one skin of water in the camp, and it was intensely foul; our beds were soaked, and we were wearied with twelve hours' ride. To add to our misfortunes, one of us set his tent on fire, although it was soon put out. But the Bedouin furnished us with an extraordinary example of endurance; not one of them thought of sleeping. During the whole of that dreary night they sat and watched, and when the morrow came, and with it intolerable thirst, they were ready as ever to start, and toiled on through the day (without a murmur) under a broiling sun and over burning rocks.

During the morning we noticed some porcupine quills—a circumstance which tends to refute the old popular belief that no animal life can exist in the immediate vicinity of the Dead Sea. But the idea has long since been exploded by the experience of other travellers. It is curious how often nature partially compensates for the blessings which in certain regions she withholds. An instance of this was afforded by a peculiar growth on the rocks—most revolting in appearance—which the Bedouin declared possessed a marvellous effect in allaying thirst. They knelt down and licked it eagerly from the naked cliffs. We were told that it is peculiar to these shores, and certainly never saw it again during our travels in Syria. About noon we found ourselves nearly opposite the middle of the peninsula, which forms a remarkable feature in the lake. It presents a light-coloured appearance, and although as a whole it is raised but a very few feet above the level of the sea, the sides are steepish near the water's edge. The heat was becoming intense, and the glare from the barren rocks almost intolerable. We now parted from our baggage, directing the men to proceed along the shore till they reached Ain Jidy, which lay sunk beyond the furthest headland we could see: our path led us more to the left, and placed between us a mass of white deposit, resembling mortar, which extends for miles along the foot of the mountains, furrowed and worn by countless streams from the wilderness above. A specimen was analysed on our return to England, and found to contain no less than 6·88 per cent of salts, soluble in water, viz. chlor. sodium, 4·559, chlor. calcium, 2·08, chlor. magnesium, 0·241. Bromine was distinctly found.

We halted to dismount beneath the towering cliff of the ancient Masada, which the Arabs call Sebbeh—one of the most attractive objects of our journey. Owing to its magnificent position, its romantic history, and the mystery which has hung over its actual site for ages, the fortress of Masada ranks very high in interest amongst the ruins of Palestine. Following a steep and winding path up the rocks to the north, in about thirty minutes we gained the first level of the Judæan wilderness. The summit of the cliff is inaccessible from this region, except by one saddle-backed ridge of shingle on the west, terribly steep. It was reached in another quarter of an hour, and found to be a table-land some mile in circumference, and surrounded by a wall which on the north-west is strengthened by towers. The face of the precipice on this side is full of tombs and caves. An old pointed archway, very perfect and picturesque, leads into the enclosure, where we found four distinct ruins; one of these on the north presents the appearance of the apse of a church; we also noticed tanks to collect the water. Quantities of mosaic lay scattered

* The place is called Um-Zoghal, and has been declared by M. de Saulcy to furnish traces of the ruins of Sodom.

on the ground, and, what was more curious, several pieces of glass.

Masada was the last of the fortresses of Judæa to withstand the arms of Rome. Its naturally strong position had been lately rendered almost impregnable by Herod the Great, when, after the destruction of Jerusalem, it was attacked by Silva, the imperial general. At first repulse followed repulse; even the flames he destined to destroy the works of the besieged, consumed the engines of the besieger. At length an adverse wind arose, and the defences were burnt. For that day the Romans withdrew, and the garrison knew that on the morrow they would have to yield to a terrible fate. They determined that it should not be at the hands of their merciless conquerors. Their number was reduced to about one thousand, including women and children. First they collected their treasure, and set it on fire, and then the men plunged their daggers into the breasts of their wives and families. Ten of the garrison were now selected by lot to despatch the rest, and when this horrible carnage was complete, one of the survivors was similarly chosen, who first slew his nine comrades, and then fell on his own sword.

As we stood on the brink of the precipice to the east, 1300 feet* above the level of the lake, the walls and forts of two Roman camps on the plain below were very evident, while on the heights to the west the line of the wall of circumvallation was also visible. It is impossible for any pen to do justice to the magnificence of the view. To the far north the eye could distinguish the dark green thread which marks the course of the Jordan through the plains of Jericho; while the sandy district to the south of the lake was equally clear. In fact, the whole of the Dead Sea, and its peninsula, bounded by walls of burning rock, and glaring under the rays of an Eastern sun, lay stretched as a panorama below. As we sat and gazed on this splendid scene of desolation we noticed an ibex, one of the wild goats of Scripture, which frequent this wilderness.† For a moment the graceful creature stood and looked at us; but one of the Bedouin raised his gun, and the next instant the animal was bounding down the sides of the frightful precipice to the plain beneath. The ibex is hunted on the plains of Damascus with the assistance of falcons. These birds are trained to alight on the creature's horns, and to flap their wings before its eyes till it is so bewildered as to be easily overtaken.

The sun had passed the zenith for many hours ere we regained our horses; the heat was more oppressive than ever, and we longed for the shelter of the slowly approaching shadows from the mountains on the west. Happily we had found water for ourselves at Sebbeh; but the animals had had none since the robbery on the previous day. For two and a half hours we crossed masses of clay, chalk, and gravel, intersected as before by deep wadys. Thus we reached the coast where the mountains approach the lake. Here is the Birket el-Khûlîl (Abraham's Pool), which has been said to afford a specimen of the old slime-pits of Sodom. It is a mere depression of the ground, covered, when we saw it, with an incrustation of salt. Beyond this, the coast became very narrow, and is strewed, as usual, with large quantities of drift-wood. For three or four miles northward the stench of sulphur is overpowering, reminding one of the pestilential miasma which arises from the brook crossing the Campagna of Rome, immediately below Tivoli. During the course of the afternoon we observed, what has often been mentioned, the glassy smoothness of the surface of the lake. The cause of this extraordinary stillness is in all probability the great specific gravity of the water, which renders it less liable to be ruffled by every current of air. No mirror could have reflected the outline of the Moab mountains more sharply than did the waters of the sea. Nor could we wonder that the changing tints of that frowning range at the hour of sunset should have formed a subject of especial study to an eminent artist of modern times. The north of the peninsula had long been passed, and we were rapidly approaching Ain Jidy, when we observed a well-defined bank, some eight or ten feet above the level of the sea, along which we were glad to ride. It was as firm and compact a mass of gravel as any carriage-drive in England.

Before leaving the coast, we bathed and found the temperature of the water 75 deg. Fahrenheit. A curious circumstance was noticed here—the existence of a current running in a northerly direction along the shore; we had only to throw ourselves on the surface of the sea to be carried sensibly along. It is not improbable that the stream is a backwater caused by the influx of the Jordan.

It was dark before the loiterers of the party commenced the steep ascent to the grove. The moon was shining, and added considerably to the wild aspect of the rocks. In about twenty minutes a thicket of tropical-looking trees was reached, amongst whose shades swarmed countless fire-flies. Here were our tents, and, what was still more delightful, a warm brook also, which rippled through the encampment. Horses and men alike plunged in. The prolonged drought rendered it indescribably charming. It is on such occasions as these, when travelling in the East, that the imagery to which we have been accustomed from childhood is realised in all its force. Henceforth the priceless value of "streams in the desert" will be a sentiment appreciated by us all. Those of our companions who had already arrived were found calmly seated in the stream luxuriating in its benignant effects, and affording a spectacle which at other times would have been as irresistibly absurd as it was now inviting. We found a few Bedouin

* The summit of the cliff of Masada is about on a level with the Mediterranean.

† "Ain Jidy" signifies the "Fountain of the kid."

about the spring, who were very friendly, and brought us a present of wild cucumbers, which made a refreshing salad.

We started about nine in a north-west direction, and immediately ascended a fearful precipice, which brought us to the summit of the cliffs. For several hours we rode across an undulating expanse of barren hills, without any adventure except meeting with a party of Ta'amirah, who, as our escort had left us, seemed inclined to fight; but the presence of Abu Dahûk restrained them from further violence than hurling a few stones at our muleteers. Towards afternoon, we regained the green mountains of Judæa. The Frank Mountain was on our right, and before sunset the village of Bethlehem came in view. Here we encamped on the same ground as before, and reached Jerusalem on the following day, in time to witness the ceremony called the Miracle of the Greek Fire.

MY NEWSPAPER.

There seems to be something in the mere fact of a man's making a speech which prevents his telling the truth. That language was given us to conceal our thoughts, we know from the subtle wisdom and biting wit of Talleyrand; but it does appear passing strange that while a man is erect on his two feet, his left hand fingering his watch-chain, while his right is tattooing on the tablecloth, he should give utterance to a series of preposterous untruths. Take my own case, for instance. Why did I, last night, at the annual summer dinner of the Most Worshipful Company of Leather Breeches Makers, held at the Ship Tavern, Greenwich—why did I, in returning thanks for the toast of "the Visitors," declare that that was the happiest moment of my life? Seated next morning in the calm seclusion of my villa at Dulwich, and recalling the exact circumstances under which that assertion was made, I find that rarely has it been my lot to be more excessively wretched and uncomfortable. I had "come down" on board an overcrowded steamer, under the garish eye of a very hot sun; I had occupied three inches of the wooden arm of a wooden seat, with a very scarlet soldier on my right, and a child labouring under that painful and easily-caught disease, "the mumps," on my left. Revelling in the anticipation of the coming banquet, I had been affronted by the constantly renewed offer on the part of a boy, of "refreshment," consisting of two mouldy captain's biscuits and three soft shiny cigars. I had been compelled to use severe language to an old person who would persist in offering me "Dawg Toby's Gallry o' Fun," a halfpenny broadsheet of villanous woodcuts, which spoke little for Dog Toby's sense of humour or sense of decency. Further, during dinner I had eaten more fish than I ought: to say nothing of the enormity of duckling and peas, Nesselrode pudding, and fondu. I had taken wine with each of the worshipful Leather Breeches Makers once, with Mr. Master twice, and with myself a good many times. I had drained a very deep goblet of claret to the Leather Breeches Makers' Company, "root and branch, may it flourish for ever" (what *does* that mean?), and when I rose to my feet to respond to the mention of my name, I was pale in the face, parched in the mouth, shaky in the legs, weak in the memory, quavery in the voice, and frightened out of my senses. That was what I called the happiest moment of my life! I should be sorry to write the word with which, in strict justice, I ought to stigmatise that expression. I know when the happiest moment of my life really comes off. Not when I receive my dividends from those very abrupt gentlemen who have, apparently, a natural hatred of their customers, across the bank counter; not when I go to my old wholesale grocery stores in Lower Thames-street, and smell the tea and taste the sugar, and dip my hand into the piled-up rice, and learn from my sons of the yearly increase of the business in which I still keep my sleeping partner's share; not when that fair-haired knickerbockered boy who calls me "grandad," makes cock-horses of my knees, and rides innumerable steeple-chases, clutching at my watch-guard for a bridle; nor when his sister, a fairy elf, makes a book-muslin glory on my lap, and kisses me as her "dear dada"—those are triumphs, if you like, but there is something too exciting in them, they are not the happiest moments of my life.

That blissful period is to me, so far as I can judge, about ten A.M. I have had my comfortable breakfast; my wife has gone down to see to the domestic arrangements for the day; if it be summer, I stroll on to the corner of my garden; if it be winter, I shut myself into my little snuggery; but, summer or winter, I find laid ready for me a box of matches, my old meerschaum bowl, ready filled, and—my newspaper. Then follows an hour composed of three thousand six hundred of the happiest moments of my life. I light my pipe, and take up my paper, duly dried and cut, without which enjoyment is to me impossible. I have seen men on the outside of an omnibus attempt to fold a newspaper in a high wind, reading to the bottom of a column, and then suddenly becoming enwrapped, swathed, smothered, in a tossing crackling sheet. Call that reading the newspaper! I like to read a bit, and puff my pipe a bit, and ponder a bit; and my ponderings are not about the machinations of the Emperor Napoleon, not about the probable result of the American war, not about the Conference, not about the state of the money market, but about that much-talked-of march of intellect, that progress of progress, that extension of civilisation, which have shown their product in my newspaper lying before me.

In the interests of my newspaper, men who have taken high collegiate honours have last night wasted the midnight oil, and before me lies the result of their deep thought, masterly

scholarship, and special study of the subject entrusted to them; not one single word was dropped by the great orators in last night's debate, finishing at two A.M., which I do not find recorded for my perusal, while the vapid prosings of the dreary members have such pith as was in them extracted into a few lines. For my gratification, and that of a hundred thousand other readers, a gentleman thoroughly competent for his task has recorded his opinion of the merits of the new tenor who last night made his first appearance at our Opera; while glancing a little lower down, one may experience quite a glow of satisfaction in reading the noble names of the superb ones who were present at the Princess's reception. In the next column, I can see exactly how stands the latest betting on the coming races, and I also find it chronicled—in a manner which I confess I never could comprehend—how yesterday's races were run, how Cœur de Lion had it all his own way to Nobb's Point, closely followed by Butcher Boy, Gipsy, Avoca, and Tatterdemalion; how, at the distance, Butcher Boy and Avoca ran out, and collared the favourite; and how just before the finish, Smith called upon the mare, and Avoca answering, was hailed the winner by a head. How on earth do they know all this? I believe these racing reports are exact descriptions of the struggle, but how do the reporters manage to see all this in a lightning flight for a mile and a half, or how do they manage to distinguish the colours of the horses? Sometimes I have fancied there are some things in a newspaper which I could do myself, but assuredly this is not one of them. I find, too, that my journal must have several sporting gentlemen attached to it, for in the same column I read an account of a yacht match at Erith, with critical remarks about the manner in which the Flirt was sailed by her noble owner, and a vivid description of a cricket match at Lord's between the elevens of Rutland and Yorkshire, with a laudatory notice of Mr. Bales's "five-er" with a leg-swipe. In a corner of this column I also find quotations from the cotton market at Manchester; from the corn markets at Leeds, Liverpool, Scotland, Ipswich; from Messrs. Sheepshanks' trade circular in regard to the colonial wool sales; and from the latest prices of hay at Smithfield and Whitechapel, where I find "the market is dull, with fair supplies." There also is spread out for me shipping intelligence informing me what vessels have arrived at, or passed by way of, our own ports, what vessels have been spoken with in far distant latitudes; there I get a meteorological report of the actual and probable state of the weather all over the United Kingdom, and in the immediate vicinity I find an elaborate report of the state of the mining market, whence I glean that Wheal Mary Anne advanced twenty shillings, and that Cotopaxis were rather flatter.

Hundreds of others are in the employment of my journal. In its interest a famous writer has taken the pilgrim's staff, and wandered through America desolated by her civil war; has passed through Mexico, and lingered among the islands of the Spanish Main, duly transmitting vivid descriptions of his adventures, and of the result of his observations. In the same interest, at all the principal continental cities, notably at Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Petersburg, and Madrid, my journal has its agents: quiet gentlemanly men: now, gay bachelors going into the fast society of the Cercle and the Jockey Club; now, steady middle-aged men, regular attendents on the Börsen Halle, now quaffing horchata, and puffing cigarettes on the Puerta del Sol, now colloquing with P. and O. captains at Alexandria, or chaffing "griffs" at Suez; but always having ears and eyes wide open, be it for a political "shave," a dancer's triumph, or a rise in the markets, and always transmitting that intelligence instanter by letters or telegram to my journal. In the same interest two gentlemen are attached, one to the head-quarters of the Danish, another to the German army; solemnly precise men are gliding about the Exchange, writing in their memorandum-books the latest quotations from Capel-court, the latest "done" at Gurney's, the latest whisper from the Bank parlour; one member of the staff is flying away in one of the compartments of a royal train, while another is pursuing his inquiries among the starving poor of Bethnal-green; one reporter has just buttoned up his note-book containing the charge of the judge to the jury trying a murderer, while another is taking down the chairman's "speech of the evening" at a charity dinner; the fire "which was still blazing fiercely when we went to press," the murder up Islington way, which was committed late last evening, the new farce, "on which the curtain did not fall till past midnight;" all are recorded in my journal, which also gives utterance to the cries of innumerable indignant amateur correspondents. Although I always wondered in a vague kind of way at the manner in which my journal was produced, when I knew nothing about it, I think my astonishment has even been greater since I saw the working of the vast engine of social progress. Arriving at about ten o'clock in the evening, I found an intelligent guide awaiting me, and by him was first conducted into the library—not necessarily a portion of a newspaper establishment, but here interesting as the depository of the volumes, from their earliest sheet, of the Times and the Morning Chronicle, once conspicuous in journalism, now defunct. I took down a volume of the Chronicle hap-hazard, and opening it at the date February 4, 1792, read a protest of the Irish Parliament on a vote of congratulation to the king on the marriage of the Duke of York with the Princess of Prussia. The Irish gentlemen were "dissentient" because they could not "consistently with principle or honour join in thanking a sovereign whom it is in the highest degree criminal to deceive, in having entered on the government of Ireland a viceroy under whose administration measures inimical to the public welfare had been supported with success, and every measure beneficial

to the kingdom uniformly opposed and defeated." The viceroy to whom this special compliment was paid was Lord Westmoreland. Poor Ireland! well up in the grievance market, even in those distant days! In the same number I found the advertisement of a "Proposal for a complete History of England, by David Hume, Esq," a notice of a gallery of pictures, "by Messrs. Barry, Copley, Fuseli, and T. Lawrence," and an announcement of the performance of Richard the Third. "The Queen, Mrs. Siddons, being the first time of her performing that character."

I proceeded to a suite of rooms occupied by the sub-editor and the principal reporters. In the outermost of these rooms is arranged the electric telegraph apparatus, three round discs with finger-stops sticking out from them like concertina-keys, and a needle pointing to alphabetic letters on the surface of the dial. One of these dials corresponds with the House of Commons, another with Mr. Reuter's telegraph office, the third with the private residence of the proprietor of my journal: who is thus made acquainted with any important news which may transpire before he arrives at, or after he leaves, the office. The electric telegraph, an enormous boon to all newspaper men, is specially beneficial to the sub-editor; by its aid he can place before the expectant leader-writer the summary of the great speech in a debate, or the momentous telegram which is to furnish the theme for triumphant jubilee or virtuous indignation; by its aid he can "make up" the paper, that is, see exactly how much composed matter will have to be left "standing over," for the tinkling of the bell announces a message from the head of the reporting staff in the House, to the effect, "House up—half a col to come." Sometimes, very rarely, wires get crossed, or otherwise out of gear, and strange messages relating to misdelivered firkins of butter, or marital excuses for not coming home to dinner, arrive at the office of my journal. The sub-editor has a story how, after having twice given the signal to a West-end office which Mr. Reuter then had, he received a pathetic remonstrance from some evidently recently awakened maiden, "Please not to ring again till I slip on my gown!" On the sub-editor's table lie the weapons of his order—a gigantic pair of scissors, with which he is rapidly extracting the pith from the pile of "flimsy" copy supplied by the aid of the manifold writer and tissue paper, by those inferior reporters known as penny-a-liners—and a pot of gum, with which he fits the disjointed bits together; here also are proofs innumerable in long slips, red, blue, and yellow envelopes, with the name of my journal printed on them in large letters, envelopes which have contained the lucubrations of the foreign and provincial correspondents; an inkstand large enough to bathe in; a red chalk pencil like the bowsprit of a ship; and two or three villanous looking pens. At another table, a gentleman, gorgeous in white waistcoat and cut-away coat, is writing an account of a fancy fair at which he has been present; printers, messengers, boys, keep rushing in, asking questions, and delivering messages, but they disturb neither of the occupants of the room. The fancy fair gentleman never raises his eyes from his paper, while, amid all the cross-questioning to which he is subjected, the sub-editor's scissors still snip calmly on.

Next, to the composing-room, where I find about seventy men at work "setting" small scraps of copy before them. The restless scissors of the head of the room divide the liner's description of horrible events, at a position of breathless interest, and distribute the glorious peroration of a speech among three or four compositors, who bring up their various contribution of type to the long "galley" in which the article is put together. These men work on an average from four P.M. till two A.M., or half-past two (in addition to these there are the regular "day-hands," or men employed in the daytime, who work from nine till five); they are mostly from twenty-five to thirty-five years of age, though there is one old man among them who is approaching threescore-and-ten, and who is reported almost as good as any of his juniors; they earn from three to four guineas a week each. The room is large, and though innumerable gas-lights are burning, the ventilation is very good.

I glanced at some of the writing at which the men were working, and as I thought of the fair round text in which my ledgers and day-books were always entered up, and then looked at the thin jigging hieroglyphics which, in close lines, and adorned with frequent erasures and corrections, lay before the eyes of those poor compositors, I shuddered at the contrast. On inquiring, however, I found that the compositors made very light of cacography, and that it was seldom, indeed, that a man had to refer to his neighbour to help him in deciphering a word.

From the composing-room I, and a certain amount of type duly set and locked up in a "forme," proceeded to the foundry: a workshop covered with scraps of metal-filings, and with a furnace in the middle of it. Unlike their fellow-workmen of the village of Auburn, as described by Goldsmith, the smiths in the foundry of my journal by no means relaxed their ponderous strengths and leaned to hear, but were obviously far too hard at work to do anything of the kind. So soon as the type-containing formes arrive, they are hammered all over with a mallet, to reduce them to an average level and consistency, then they are oiled, and an exact imprint is taken of them on what is called a "matrix"—a preparation of French chalk on stiff paper. This matrix is then dried over a furnace on hot metal plates, a mixture of lead and antimony in a liquid boiling state is poured on it, taking the exact form of the indented letters, filling up every crack and crevice, and becoming, in many reduplicated forms, the actual substance from which the journal is printed, and which, to that end, is sent to the machine-room, whither I followed it.

The machine-room of my journal is a vast whitewashed hall, with three enormous clanging, plunging, whirling metal demons in the midst of it, attended by priests and devotees, half of whom are employed in administering to their idols' appetites by feeding them with virgin paper, while the other half wrenches from them the offering after it has passed through the ordeal. In plainer language, the demons are three of Hoe's most powerful printing machines, containing together twenty-six cylinders, and in attendance upon them are eighty men and boys, half of whom feed the machines with fresh paper, while the other half receive the sheets after they have passed under the cylinders. The cylinders in these machines make one million four hundred and five thousand revolutions in the course of one night, and, for a single day's circulation, travel at the rate of nearly nine hundred and eighty-five miles. When its machines are in full swing, my journal is produced at the rate of eight hundred and eighty-four copies per minute. The length of paper used in one day in my journal, will make a path one yard wide and nearly one hundred and sixteen miles long; one day's circulation placed edge to edge would closely cover a piece of land of nearly forty-three acres; one week's circulation, placed one on the top of the other, would make a column three hundred and nineteen feet high. The weight of paper used in one day's circulation of my journal is seven tons thirteen hundred-weight two quarters and twenty pounds; there are also three hundred and ninety-six pounds of ink consumed in one night's printing; and the length of tape used upon the machines is a little over four miles. In the midst of all this whirling dazzling confusion, accidents very seldom occur; the ringing of a bell, the movement of a handle, and the rotation of the engine ceases instantaneously. To a stranger, the vast room, with its glare of gas, its smell of oil and steam, and its whirring engines, is a kind of orderly Pandemonium. There are galleries whence he can survey all that passes; but a few minutes must elapse before his eyes become accustomed to the tearing of the engine, and his ears to the clanging discord; though those employed seem thoroughly habituated, and pursue their avocations as though they were in the quiet composing-room itself. Indeed, the head engineer, who acted as my guide in this department, took such interest in his work, that he told me he seldom took a holiday or absented himself from his post. He evidently regarded those who did not ordinarily spend their evenings in the company of his machines as inferior beings.

So the demons go clanging through the night until they are supposed to have had as much as is good for them, and their fires are raked out, their steam let is off, and machinists and feeding-boys go home to bed, whither the compositors and the sub-editor have long since preceded them. Then, the advanced guard of the day establishment, in the persons of the publisher and his staff, appear upon the scene. The street outside is lined with light spring carts, with those peculiarly bony horses which always seem to come into newsvendors' hands; crowds of men and boys fight up the passage to the publishing office, while inside there is a hullabaloo compared to which the howling at an Irish wake is silence, and the parrot-house at the Zoological Gardens a quiet retreat. Right has very little chance against might in such a medley as this, and the weakest usually goes to the wall; but eventually the big wooden tables are cleared, the last load has been carried to the van, the last boy has rushed off with his arms full of damp literature, and the starters by the Parliamentary for Liverpool at seven have my journal on their knees, while merchant princes resident at Brighton, and coming thence by the "daily bread" express at a quarter to ten, find it on their breakfast-tables at half-past eight.

Taking such things into consideration, is it wonderful that I regard my newspaper as a marvel, and that I from time to time lay it down, to ponder over the capital, talent, and energy involved in its production?

THE POISON CHAMBER OF PARIS.

Setting aside all reference to the political crimes committed during the long reign of Louis the Fourteenth—the "grand monarque" of worn-out tradition—there were many social stains which sadly dimmed its reputed splendour. Amongst these, the series of events which French writers call "L'affaire des poisons," is undoubtedly the most remarkable, though it has been made—at least in modern times—no very prominent subject of discussion. The trial of the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, for poisoning her father, her brothers, and other victims, has usually absorbed public attention, as if she and her immediate accomplices were simply associated in guilt that was special to themselves; but this Brinvilliers case was far from being an isolated one. On the contrary, it was but the precursor of a general system of poisoning. Society, tainted by the very worst vices, was widely infected by the desire which prompted La Brinvilliers to her many murders. It was even believed that secret laboratories existed in Paris, where ruined spendthrifts, members of disunited families, and impatient heritors, might obtain the untraceable poison that was to make them rich, by removing the objects of their hate. This belief, or the apprehension arising from it, was not confined to the vulgar, but was shared by the very judges who condemned La Brinvilliers, as may be seen by the directions given to the priest who confessed her before her execution, by the First President, Lamoignon, who said: "It is in the interest of the public that her crimes should perish with her, and that she should forearm us, by the declaration of all she knows, against the consequences which may arise from that knowledge." In this expectation the judges were disappointed.

The Marchioness de Brinvilliers was executed on the 16th of July, 1676. A little more than a year afterwards—that is to say, on the 21st of September, 1677—an anonymous letter was found in a confessional of the Jesuits' church in the Rue Saint Antoine in Paris, in which it was stated that a plot existed for poisoning both the king and the dauphin. This letter greatly disturbed the Sieur La Reynie, the lieutenant-general of police, to whom it was brought, and he set to work at once to endeavour to discover its author. Eventually, he laid his hands on two persons—Louis Vanens and Robert de la Mirée. It was ascertained that Vanens, who professed to study alchemy, was a manufacturer of love-philters, and worse, having poisoned the Duke of Savoy some years before; while the other was his agent. La Reynie pursued a system of induction, and gradually got at several persons, namely, La Bosse, the widow of a horse-dealer; La Vigoureux, the wife of "a woman's tailor;" one Nail, and a woman named Lagrange. The two latter were convicted of preparing poisons, condemned to death, and executed on the 6th of February, 1679. At the same time evidence was taken against La Bosse and Vigoureux, the result of which was the arrest, on the 12th of March, of a certain Catherine Deshayes, the wife of a jeweller, named Antoine Mauvoisin, or Voisin, as she was returning from mass in the church of Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Nouvelles—bad news for many of the great ones of Paris. From the date of La Voisin's arrest, the poisoning affair assumed unexpected dimensions. Although the judges were enjoined to exercise the utmost discretion, a rumour soon spread throughout Paris that the highest in rank and the nearest to the throne were compromised by La Voisin, and one fine day, the 23rd of January, 1680, warrants were issued for the apprehension of the Count de Clermont, a prince of the House of Bourbon, the Duchess de Bouillon, the Princess de Tingry, lady of the queen's palace, the Marchioness d'Alluye, the Countess du Roure, Madame de Polignac, the Duke de Luxembourg, and others of equal position, and that some of them had been conveyed to the Bastille. It was also stated that a sister of the Duchess de Bouillon, the Countess de Soissons, Mazarin's niece, she who had been the first favourite of the king, and was the superintendent of the queen's household, had, through the indulgence of Louis the Fourteenth, been allowed to quit Paris in all haste, and thus escape the misfortune which had befallen the rest.

Louis the Fourteenth behaved tolerably well in this affair. He determined to prosecute all concerned in it, without distinction of rank. But it must not be forgotten that the lives threatened were his own, and those of members of his family. The king's instructions were most precise, and free from partiality. The more the inquiry was prosecuted, the wider the implications, and the number of the proposed victims extended. The personages endangered, besides the king and the dauphin, were the minister Colbert, Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and the Duchess de Fontanges; while the Duchess de Vivonne and Madame de Montespan herself were included as participators in the meditated crime. La Reynie, who had orders to send a report of the judicial proceedings every day both to Colbert and Louvois, relates that on the 6th of February, 1680, he presented himself at the king's "lever" at St. Germains, and that his majesty said to him several things of importance ("plusieurs choses de conséquence"), adding, that it "was necessary to make war on another crime," which he did not otherwise explain. The mystery which attaches to these words, La Reynie does not unfold, but the papers which he has left, and which still exist in the Imperial Library of Paris, and elsewhere, make it apparent that all the interrogations put to the prisoners, with their replies, were not indiscriminately shown to all the judges, in order that facts should not be divulged which were intended solely for the information of the king, of Colbert, and of Louvois. Exceptionally written on flying sheets, these examinations could easily be destroyed, and thus a commission was constituted within a commission. It was, besides, intended that these papers should be burnt, but, as always happens in such cases, injunctions of this strict nature are never obeyed—and the originals, as well as copies of them, remain to this hour, which enable us in a great degree to reconstruct the trial, the gravity of which the public of that day was far from suspecting. Amongst these papers are some which Colbert has characterised as "sacrilege, profanation, abomination—things too execrable to be set down on paper"—but their nature may be guessed at by referring to Dulaure's History of Paris, though he, too, speaks of them with a certain reticence. Omitting, then, all such details, we turn to the actual trial of La Voisin, the real object of which was to enable the king to ascertain if there were actually near his person, and enjoying his intimacy, those who had conceived the idea of poisoning him, or of causing him to swallow philters which should eventually produce the same effect.

The magnitude of this trial may be conceived from the fact that no fewer than two hundred and forty-six persons were included in the accusation, thirty-six of whom were put to death after undergoing the ordinary and extraordinary "question" (torture), while of those whose lives were spared, some were condemned to perpetual imprisonment, the galleys, and exile, and the rest arbitrarily detained in confinement for the remainder of their days. The most guilty of the band were condemned for poisoning, sorcery, and impious masses, accompanied by the sacrifice of infants; and fortune-telling, however simple the folly may now appear, was looked upon as the root of the general evil. La Reynie tells us that in the confession of La Bosse (before she was burnt), she made use of these expressive words: "The best thing that can be done is to exterminate the entire class of dealers in palmistry, who are the ruin of women of quality and

others, their weakness being soon found out, and acted upon at once when it is discovered."

The fortune-teller was, in fact, the grand resource of all who sought to realise unlawful wishes, and the most in vogue of these givers of bad gifts was the jeweller's wife, La Voisin, whose former profession had been that of a midwife. Finding that this pursuit brought in too little, she resolved to speculate on public credulity by telling fortunes by cards and drawing horoscopes, accomplishments which were the precursors only of a more lucrative but more dangerous profession, that of selling poisons and philters.* The manner of La Voisin's arrest was in this wise: Denounced by one of the first batch of prisoners made by La Reynie, she was taken the day before presenting a petition to the king in favour of a lover of hers, a military officer named Blessis, and, once in the unrelenting gripe of the law, she herself became a general accuser. According to her statements, she had been consulted for several years by the Countess du Roure and Madame de Polignac, who were desirous of securing the king's love and getting rid of Mademoiselle La Vallière. She declared that the Countess de Soissons, desperate at seeing that Louis the Fourteenth remained faithful to his mistress in spite of the spells employed to detach him from her, had said: "If he does not return to me, and I cannot get her turned off, my vengeance shall go the length of making away with them both." But, however she might attempt to screen herself by denouncing others, enough of actual crime was proved against La Voisin to cause her condemnation, and after the usual amount of torture she was burnt alive on the 22nd of February, 1680. Her judges seem to have been in a hurry to execute La Voisin, while the greater part of her titled accomplices were still under arrest, with nothing proved against them. The affair was certainly complicated by her death, as it put a stop to further revelations on the part of the person best qualified to make them. But whether they were equally capable or not of throwing light on the great mystery, other accusers soon appeared in the person of La Voisin's daughter, of a woman named Filastre, and of two priests—Lesage and Guibourg—who made avowal of certain facts, which, immediately communicated by Colbert and Louvois, made a great impression on the king. A letter from Louvois to La Reynie, dated the 18th of October, 1679, informs the lieutenant-general of police that he had been the evening before to Vincennes, where Lesage was confined, and that he had promised him his life if he made a full confession. To this Lesage, who was an almoner in the family of Montmorency, at first agreed, but afterwards drew back. When, however, the girl La Voisin spoke out after her mother's execution, Lesage no longer hesitated, but said he must see, in the first instance, what it was the younger La Voisin had revealed. According to her declaration, the object of her mother in seeking to present a petition to the king was to take the opportunity of poisoning him by gliding certain powders into his pocket and scattering them on his handkerchief. She declared, that for years past, her mother had had relations with Madame de Montespan; that one of her women, the Demoiselle Desœillets, "who concealed her name, but she knew her perfectly," had been many times with her mother, to whom she gave letters; that every time Madame de Montespan had feared "some diminution of the king's fondness for her," La Voisin was informed of it, and instructed to procure masses and send love powders for the king to take; and that, finally, these practices having failed, Madame de Montespan had resolved to carry matters to extremity by employing two of her mother's creatures, Romané and Bertrand (both of whom were arrested), to introduce themselves into the apartments of Mademoiselle de Fontanges to sell her poisoned stuffs and gloves. The girl Voisin also spoke of a mass performed by the Abbé Guibourg in presence of an English nobleman, who had promised a hundred thousand livres if the king could be poisoned.

There were numerous inconsistencies and several lies, no doubt, in the girl's declaration, but La Reynie laid stress upon it because—whatever they might have been worth—it was, in many respects, in conformity with the revelations afterwards made by more credible witnesses. The Abbé Lesage, for instance, declared in his interrogatory of the 16th of November, 1680, that he had seen the Demoiselle Desœillets with a foreigner at the house of La Voisin. Their project was to poison the king, that they might share a large sum of money which the foreigner had promised them, and then escape from France. Lesage added that, were he at his latest torments, he was able to say nothing else, except this: that, in the early part of the summer of 1675, Madame de Montespan, being desirous of maintaining her credit, La Voisin and Desœillets worked, or made pretence of working, for her; but that, in reality powerless to ensure the king's love for the marchioness, they turned her to account by giving her powders which, taken in constant doses, would have been a certain poison. For this purpose mixtures, containing arsenic and corrosive sublimate, had been given to Desœillets, and a person named Vautier, an artist in poisons, had manufactured similar powders combined with snuff. The facts stated by the Abbé Guibourg confirmed the preceding depositions, which assumed a character of greater gravity from the circumstance of the connexion between Desœillets and La Voisin, the latter having always formally denied that they knew each other. In this respect, therefore, it was clear that La Voisin had lied, unless, indeed, the

* It will scarcely be credited, but the writer of this paper was told by a most respectable chemist in his neighbourhood, only a few days since, that he was in the habit of being constantly applied to for philters—twice a week at least. He added that he ministered to these wants by selling an entirely harmless mixture with which the applicants went away perfectly satisfied.

depositions of her daughter and the priests were false.

The revelations of Filastre were still more compromising. This woman, a worthy rival of La Voisin, carried on a regular trade in poisons, and was convicted, besides the most execrable acts of wickedness, of having sacrificed one of her own children to obtain its blood. One witness declared to have seen a writing in which she had made a formal compact with the devil to ensure her all she desired to obtain from people of quality; that the Duchess de Vivonne, who sought to succeed her sister-in-law, Madame de Montespan, in the king's favour, was named in this paper; and that there was something in it about Fouquet being re-established in the place of Colbert, whose death was demanded. According to the Abbé Lesage, Madame de Vivonne had moreover signed a paper, in conjunction with the Duchess d'Angoulême and Madame de Vitry, by which it was formally agreed to procure the death of Madame de Montespan. Put to the question, on the 30th of September, 1680, La Filastre declared, amongst other things, that the Abbé Guibourg had said mass in a cellar over a compact between Madame de Montespan and a person of quality, having for its object the death of Colbert. Upon these and similar revelations, however, no reliance could be placed, for, in her last confession, shortly before her execution, La Filastre told the priest that what she had said of Madame de Montespan was not true, being influenced to make them by the severity of the torture, and the dread of its being re-applied.

There were discrepancies enough in these accusations, but they produced a very painful effect on Louis the Fourteenth's mind, as appears from a voluminous series of extracts from the examinations made by Colbert himself; from the observations of Claude Duplessis, a celebrated advocate of the time, to whom they were submitted; and from the letters written on the subject by Louvois to the king and the lieutenant-general of police.

It did, however, plainly appear that the highest personages at court, the king, the queen, the dauphin, Colbert, the Duchess de la Vallière, the Duchess de Fontanges, might have been the objects of criminal attempts, the presumed authors of which were the Countess de Soissons, the Marchioness de Montespan, the Duchess de Vivonne, and Fouquet or his agents, while Madame de Montespan was herself in danger from impatient rivals. The situation of Colbert was quite peculiar, numerous witnesses concurring in the assertion that his life was threatened, and one of his own letters has a tendency to confirm their declarations. "As my stomach is ill at ease," he wrote, on the 19th of November, 1672, "I have for some time adopted a very careful regimen. I dine alone, and take only a chicken and soup at that meal. In the evening I eat a bit of bread and some broth." This regimen, which was communicated to La Reynie, made him suspicious of the cause, and in one of his instructions he directs attention to "the time when M. Colbert was ill," and desires that search may be made for "a servant who had been tampered with." One thing is curious in this business: Louvois never once mentions the name of Madame de Montespan, though the papers of Colbert and La Reynie sufficiently fill up the gap, and in reading those of the lieutenant-general of police, the fluctuating opinions of the king respecting the accusations made against his favourite mistress, may be traced from day to day. Much that was alleged against her was, without doubt, of too monstrous a nature to be true, but La Reynie had too much experience of criminal proceedings readily to accept denials of former statements when the facts were there to show that there was good reason for having made them, and in one of his papers he says: "The denial made by La Voisin to the last, of having any knowledge of Mademoiselle Desœillets, is rendered the more suspicious by her obstinate persistence in it, because it has been *proved* that there was intercourse between them, and if Mademoiselle Desœillets herself denies that intercourse, it appears that that circumstance ought to increase our suspicion."

It is evident, indeed, from the whole of the document, although he makes certain reserves as to the veracity of the accused, that he inclines to the belief that Madame de Montespan had applied to La Voisin and La Filastre for powders that might have endangered the king's life, and that Madame de Vivonne, her own sister-in-law, would not have shrunk from the employment of poison to get rid of a rival. He also seems to admit that the Duchess de Fontanges, then a prey to an incurable malady, had been poisoned. Rumours to this effect were, in fact, in general circulation, and the Princess Palatine, whose maid of honour De Fontanges had been, did not hesitate to express the same opinion. That the king himself had doubts, appears by the following letter, written by him to the Duke de Noailles, on receiving from him the news of the young duchess's death on the 28th of June, 1681: "Saturday, ten o'clock. Although I have for some time expected the news you send, it has not the less surprised and made me sorry (me fâcher). I see by your letter that you have given all the necessary orders for executing what I commanded. You have only to continue that which you have begun. Remain as long as your presence is necessary, and then come and give me an account of everything. You tell me nothing of Father Bourdaloue. *As to the desire to open the body, I think, if it can be avoided, it will be better not to do so.* Address a compliment on my part to the brothers and sisters, and assure them that they will always find me disposed to give them marks of my protection. Louis." As heartless a letter this as could well be written, all the desire of the royal writer being evidently to prevent further scandal: the difficulties which surrounded the case increasing with every fresh step taken to throw light upon it. La Reynie appears to have felt this, and to have become embarrassed as to the way in which he should proceed. In a letter to

Louvois, written on the 11th of October, 1680, he admits that he cannot penetrate the darkness by which he is environed, and asks for further time for reflection, though he owns that, after having reflected, he may probably be in the position of seeing less what he ought to do. La Reynie was evidently bewildered in a labyrinth of denunciations, and the trial seemed likely to last for ever if the minister Colbert had not decided to take up the question. He saw that its continued agitation must have the effect of compromising, and might, possibly, convict Madame de Montespan and Madame de Vivonne, with both of whom he was connected by family alliances, and of turning to the disadvantage of royalty itself.

He accordingly desired the advocate Duplessis, of whom mention has been already made, to lend his aid in bringing the matter to a crisis by considering what course had better be adopted towards the general body of the prisoners. There were, he observed, three ways of proceeding: To continue the trial, which was not now the wish of the king; to pass sentence on the most guilty—such as Lesage, Guibourg, and the girl Voisin; or to transport, without sentence, the whole lot (toutes ces canailles) to Canada, Cayenne, the American islands, or St. Domingo. Colbert himself preferred the adoption of the second expedient, on the condition of also confining some twenty of the minor culprits in one of the prisons near Paris, and of keeping the rest "au secret la plus rigoureux." Duplessis eagerly took up the matter, but it is not necessary for us to follow the details of his arguments and opinions, with reference to the persons of quality chiefly compromised, set forth, as we have found them, by M. Pierre Clement, of the Institute of France, who has examined all the original documents bearing upon the question—the conclusion at which he arrived being the essential point. After pointing out, as Colbert had done, that various courses might be taken, he advised that all the prisoners should be summarily dealt with, insisting strongly upon the necessity of putting no more of them to the question, and that all the proceedings should be burnt. With certain reservations the advice of Duplessis prevailed. The papers were not destroyed, nor were all the prisoners sentenced, but sacrifices enough were made. La Reynie's report tells us how the majority of the accused were disposed of—the "canaille," be it understood, and not the king's mistresses or the courtiers who had been implicated in these dangerous and disreputable transactions. Thirty-six persons were put to death, among whom were La Voisin (the elder), La Filastre, La Vigoureux, a certain Madame de Carada, several priests, and Jean Maillard, an auditor of accounts, a suspected agent of Fouquet. A great number underwent imprisonment and deportation, and no fewer than eighty were detained by the king's order, and judgment was suspended in the case of not the least guilty of the series—such as the girl Voisin, Lesage, Guibourg, and several others, whose depositions had pressed most heavily on Madame de Montespan and the Duchess de Vivonne. What became of these people was never known, though the registers of the Bastille and remoter fortresses could doubtless have told.

Constituted by letters patent in the month of April, 1679, the Chamber of the Arsenal (or "Poison Chamber") was not dissolved till the end of July, 1682, a period of rather more than three years. The fact was announced in a letter from the king to the Chancellor Boucherat, in which it was stated that the principal authors of the crimes which had been brought to the knowledge of the commissaries of the court having been punished, it had been deemed advisable to dissolve the Chamber, at the same time providing for the safety of the public. A royal ordonnance was also issued about the same time, the preamble of which set forth that "a great number of magicians and enchanters, lately arrived in France from foreign countries, had made many dupes and victims by practising vain curiosities and superstitions, and mingling sorcery and poisoning with impiety and sacrilege." To remedy this evil, Louis the Fourteenth decreed that all fortune-tellers of both sexes should immediately leave the kingdom, and ordered the penalty of death to be inflicted on whosoever should be convicted of having performed those sacrilegious and abominable masses, which had been one of the principal crimes borne witness to in the late trial. The sixth article of the ordonnance showed the uncertainty of the Chamber respecting the agency of mysterious poisons: "Shall be reputed amongst the number, not only those which may cause sudden and violent death, but those also which cause illnesses by gradually undermining health, whether the said poisons are simple, natural, or compounded by artistic means." Finally, another article, which betrayed one of the chief preoccupations of La Reynie, prohibited the employment as medicaments of certain creatures, such as serpents, toads, vipers, &c., without special permission, an injunction bearing upon the love powders destined for the king by Madame de Montespan, according to the testimony of various witnesses. What degree of culpability attached to the imperious favourite and the rest of the great personages involved in the wide-spread accusation, which led to the establishment of the Poison Chamber of Paris, must rather be inferred than declared, but the morals of the time were such as to justify the worst suspicions.

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BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXVI. BEHIND THE MADELEINE.

BEHIND the church of the Madeleine, Rataplan—ex-drummer of the Imperial Guard, ex-landlord of the Hôtel Rataplan, hard by Leicester-square, London—kept a tavern for the accommodation of English visitors to the only city in the world worth living in.

Rataplan was old, his eye was glassy, his hand tremulous, his voice husky, and his frame feeble, but he was as fat as ever. His adiposity was pendulous and flabby now, not firm and juicy, but it was fat, nevertheless, and, at his age, that was something to be thankful for.

Rataplan had given up cooking. It fatigued him too much, he said. It was much if the visitors to his hostelry could obtain a biftek aux pommes, or an underdone slice from an ill-roasted joint. Rataplan's long residence in Albion had not disabused his mind of the impression that all English people liked their meat very nearly raw; and whenever an English groom (say) or a workman employed at some factory in Paris ordered a beefsteak to be cooked in the English fashion, Rataplan would answer, "I know, ver well red, n'est-ce-pas? Well bleeding, bien saignant, hein?"

Nor had the good man's protracted sojourn in the perfidious country enabled him to attain anything approaching a copious, or even fluent, acquaintance with its language. A stock of idiomatic expressions he had, indeed, laid up, which would have seemed to argue some familiarity with our vernacular, but he still, to all intents and purposes, spoke English execrably.

He wore the attire of a petty bourgeois now, in lieu of his old and unvarying culinary costume. It did not improve his personal appearance much. He had looked as well, if not better, in his white jacket, apron, and nightcap, cloudy in hue as those habiliments habitually were, than in a shabby snuff-coloured surtout with a cotton velvet collar, a dingy nankeen waistcoat, striped trousers much too short for him, and a cloth cap with a peak to it.

Affairs had not gone prosperously with him at the Hôtel Rataplan. He had failed to make anything like a competency, much less a fortune, out of that establishment. In the first place, Mademoiselle Adèle, his daughter, had made a mésalliance: having, in defiance of her father's commands, not only encouraged the addresses of a dissolute fiddler at the French Plays, but absolutely got up very early one morning and allied herself in marriage to that objectionable person. It was a terrible blow for Rataplan. "Encore," he was wont to say, "if they had gone to the Bavarian chapel in Warwick-street! But Mademoiselle must needs immolate herself at a church of I know not what sect of the Anglican dissidence in the Soho. She had abjured, forsooth, the errors of the Romish communion! Wicked men with white neckcloths and little paper books had been, it appears, pursuing her for months. She became what you call a convert. She was the victim of their machinations sourdes. Parlez-moi de ça. You sacrifice yourself like the pelican of the wilderness. You tear out your entrails to nourish a viper, and behold, the viper turns round and stings you. Encore, had it been in France, my daughter would have been compelled to address to me three solemn citations—trois sommations respectueuses — before she could have dared to commit the fatal act. But she has accomplished her act of disobedience and folly, and now this vagabond of a fiddler beats my Adèle. Ma parole d'honneur, c'est à faire blanchir les cheveux. It is enough to make one's hair turn white."

It would have taken an extreme degree of agony to turn Papa Rataplan's hair white. He had none to turn; he was quite bald.

Then la Mère Thomas died, and Rataplan had to bury her. Then his customers fell off, and he lost the most profitable of his guests, the hot-tempered countess, who suddenly disappeared. Then Rataplan got into trouble with the police for winking at the contraband amusements of a select society of cooks in the employ of divers noblemen, gentlemen, and hotel-keepers in the British metropolis, who were accustomed to dine at the Hôtel Rataplan, and afterwards to play vingt-et-un all night. He was threatened with the loss of his license. The threat did not do him much harm, for the butcher sued him, and then the distiller put an execution into the premises, and finally there came collapse, and Rataplan passed through the Bankruptcy Court.

He bore his downfal with becoming resig-

nation. He carefully returned as bad, all the debts owing to him by his countrymen, and by this stroke of policy not only obviated the possibility of their being pressed for payment, but moved a few of them, through personal gratitude, to pay him, after he had undergone the ordeal of whitewashing, some few pounds by way of bonus. "It will enable me to cultivate my cabbages," he remarked, philosophically.

Returning to his native country, a gleam of good fortune shot unexpectedly across his path. He met with a person whom he had not seen for ten years. This person was Jean Baptiste Constant, ex-body-servant to Francis Blunt, Esquire, who had always been of an active and pushing turn of mind, and had gone into business at Chaillot as a manufacturer of paper-hangings, and was doing, according to his own account, pretty well. He was anxious to realise a fortune, he said; not for himself, but he had some one to leave it to. But where was that some one? To his misery and despair he could not tell. What had become of the countess and of her child? They had disappeared, no one could say which way. He kept up a correspondence with friends in half the towns in Europe, but had never been able to obtain a scintilla of information relating to Lily or her mother. The countess seemed to have vanished from the stage, or rather from the ring. In the chronicles of the sawdust she was no longer known, even by her horse-riding name.

Jean Baptiste Constant commiserated the decayed state of his old friend Rataplan. The bankrupt hotel-keeper said he had had, by this time, quite enough of England, and that he only desired to re-enter London once more, if it were possible, at the head of an invading army of his countrymen. "How I would sack Laycesterre-squarr, and give up the 'Aymarket to the pillage," he was wont to murmur between his set teeth, grinding them meanwhile. "Yes; and that street most infamous, of the Basinghall. Ah! not one of the functionaries of that tribunal so proud, from the insolent president to the lowest huissier, but should passer par les armes, —all, all, be put to the sword." The vindictiveness of Rataplan was insatiable and inexorable.

So Jean Baptiste Constant, after meditating for a time as to how the old man's knowledge of a country he professed to detest so much could best be utilised, determined to set him up in business again in a little twentieth-rate café, then for sale, just behind the church of the Madeleine. The street was new; the Rouen and Havre Railway, the erection of whose terminus in the Rue d'Amsterdam has so revolutionised this part of Paris, was not yet dreamt of; the rent was very low, and the coming in very reasonable. Rataplan was once more gratified by becoming a landlord. In the evening of life it was again his privilege to cook and to command. Still were the conditions imposed upon him by his friend, patron, and benefactor, Jean Baptiste, not devoid of a certain degree of severity. "Rataplan, mon bon," said the ex-valet to the rehabilitated bankrupt, "you tried long enough to set up a little Paris in the midst of London. That was to please yourself. You made, unless I am mistaken, rather a mess of it. Now, if you have no objection, you shall please *me*. I want you to set up a little London in the midst of Paris."

"Never, never!" Rataplan would at first and vehemently protest. "Jamais en France l'Anglais ne règnera. No, no, a hundred times no. Between Rataplan and Albion, the thrice perjured and perfidious, there yawns a gulf of hatred and scorn, which blood, and blood alone, can cumulate."

"Very well," the valet would gravely reply. "You shall sell bifteks bien saignants. That is blood, is it not? One must accomplish his destiny, my Rataplan, and yours is to do as you are told."

In the end, Rataplan submitted, cheerfully enough, to the accomplishment of his destiny, and did as he was told, most loyally. He entered, at first grumbling, but at last smiling, into the plans of J. B. Constant. They were worthy of that astute and experienced operator. The dingy little Café-Estaminet Pharamond in the Rue Cuit-au-Four, that miserable den where you could procure nothing but tough flaps of beef, fried potatoes, burnt bean and chicory coffee, corrosive absinthe, questionable cognac, lettuce-leaf cigars, boxes of rickety dominoes, and greasy packs of cards, suddenly started into a fresh phase of existence as the Café Restaurant Chesterfield. At first, J. B. Constant had thought of christening his establishment "Le Clarendon," "Le Mivart," "Le Cavendish," or "Le Mansion House;" but, on reflection, he admitted that there were difficulties in the way of the proper pronunciation by foreign lips of nearly all those names. But every Frenchman has heard of Milor Chesterfield, and among the natives the Café Restaurant Chesterfield soon attained considerable notoriety; while to the especial class of sojourners in Paris whom Constant hoped to secure as patrons, the word Chesterfield had not only an English but a sporting sound, and, consequently, soon became very popular.

The patrons he had pitched upon were a curious race. In every great city, much frequented by foreigners, there are two undercurrents of a town life: first, the retainers of the high and mighty strangers who are on their travels; and, next, the shiftless and out-of-elbows creatures who, having once come abroad, are prevented by poverty from getting home again. Sometimes they contrive, after years of borrowing and begging, to raise sufficient funds to return to the country which has no longer any need of them; but in many instances they never do get home, and, shuffling through a shabby and disreputable life, on the few wits a craving for bad brandy has left them, die at last, and are buried in the Potter's Field. Such people every continental metropolis numbers by hundreds or by thousands. Generally they belong to the English nation. We do not consider ourselves to be foreigners, anywhere; so my

countrymen will understand what I mean in saying that foreigners have usually very little difficulty in foregathering, intermingling with, and assimilating themselves to other foreigners. This the Englishman rarely if ever does. He is, to the end, insular, carries something about him that is purely, peculiarly, and—to others but his compatriots—repulsively, English wherever he goes, and leaves at last his coffin to be covered with a phantom Union Jack. Do you know Jack Moseley—they say the "ley" is an interpolation between where an "e" is, and an "s" should be in his name—the tall, handsome Israelite, whom his friends call the Wandering Jew, and who has been travelling and trading in diamonds from the Minories to the Straits of Malacca any time these twenty years? Well, Jack told me he was coming the other day, from the Warhoe diggings in California, overland to Florence in the State of Missouri. It was somewhere in the Rocky Mountains, I think. It was at night, and he was huddled up in a stage-coach, asleep, and dreaming of bears, wolves, and wild Indians. Suddenly the coach broke down, but fortunately close to a little tavern. Jack Moseley rubbed his eyes and thought he was still dreaming, when, alighting, he found himself in front of the precise model of an English wayside inn. There was the bench, there was the horse-trough, in front; there were the red and white blinds to the windows; there was the bar, with its big cheese in full cut, its pork pies, its row of gaily-painted kegs of cordials, and its well-polished beer-engine. There was the little parlour, with its neatly sanded floor, its triangular spittoons, its rack of churchwarden pipes, and its coloured prints of fights for the championship, racing cracks, and Sir Tatton Sykes in top-boots, affably conversing with his trainer, who was bald-headed, white-cravated, and respectful, in drab gaiters. There was a grinning ostler, there was a stout potboy, there was a spruce waitress; there was positively a one-eyed bulldog on the premises. On the coffee-room blinds there flourished the approved golden legends as to chops and steaks that were always ready, dinners that were to be dressed, neat wines and soda-water; but wonder of wonders! what do you think the sign was? Not the "George Washington," not "The Jefferson," not the "Bold Digger," not the "Big Nugget," not the "Lucky Placer," but "The Osbaldistone Arms." The landlord was an American born, but his grandfather had been a groom in the Osbaldistone family in England. He subscribed to Bell's Life and the local Yorkshire papers regularly, and his little house looked as though some magician had suddenly caught it up from the English north country and dropped it down in the middle of the Rocky Mountains.

Rataplan, incited by J. B. Constant, did his best to Anglicise the Café Restaurant Chesterfield. A little England sprang up in the Rue Cuit-au-Four, looking as strange there as the English colony of Heligoland at the mouth of the Elbe. The partners imported the double and biting Gloucester, the luscious Cheshire, the voluptuous cheese of Stilton. English ale and English porter were always on draught, and a joint, of as near an approach to English beef as could be procured at the butcher's in the neighbouring Rue St. Lazare, was always in cut. Sandwiches were displayed under glass covers, to the intense amazement of the French customers, who, sometimes trying them, frequently managed to drop the layer of meat on the floor, and, when they burnt their mouths with the fiery English mustard, howled dismally. Nor was English gin forgotten; nor did the craft which Rataplan had learnt in London, of making three quarts into one gallon, forsake him now.

M. Jean Baptiste Constant moved about the establishment of which Rataplan was the manager and the nominal landlord, but in which the wary ex-body servant of Mr. Francis Blunt had taken care to secure a proprietorial interest in his usual discreet and demure, not to say stealthy, manner. Every knife, fork, and napkin in the place was his; yet you would not have thought, to look at him, that he would have ventured to take a spoonful of salt without permission. He rarely interfered with Rataplan's arrangements. He allowed him undivided control in the kitchen. He permitted him to scold his two waiters, and to overcharge the guests as much as ever he liked. He allowed him a fair share in the profits, which had, in a short space of time, grown to be considerable: but he was nevertheless lord paramount and absolute over the Café Restaurant Chesterfield. He liked to sway this secret power, to have this occult veto, to be behind the scenes, and pull the wires, and make the puppets dance. It suited his pensive, bilious, cat-like, contemplative nature. The sunshine was too strong for him. He blinked, and the pupils of his eyes contracted in the noontide glare. He had not been accustomed to it in youth. He could bask; but he preferred to bask in the shade, and down in a cellar.

He liked to breakfast at the Chesterfield sometimes, just to see how things were going on: paying for his meal, like a man, at the counter. The waiters did not know exactly what to make of them. They were both Swiss, who had been abroad, and picked up more or less "pigeon English" in Haymarket cafés and Leicester-square hotels. One of them, Jules, imagined him to be a kind of pensioner or hanger-on of the establishment, boarded from time to time, through charity, by the patron Rataplan. The other, Alphonse, had a somewhat shrewder notion of his standing in the house. "I will wager," Alphonse would say to his intimates, "that this monsieur is le bailleur de fonds—the capitalist—the finder of money to the Café Restaurant Chesterfield."—"But how can he be a capitalist," the duller-witted Jules would expostulate. "He never scolds us. He never calls us 'nigaud,' or 'cochon.' Is that like a bailleur de fonds."—"Bah!" Alphonse would retort. "Jules, thou hast an excellent heart, but thou hast a skull of wood, filled with sauce à la tartare in place of brains. Do kings and queens always wear their crowns? Was the

Emperor always crossing the Alps on a white horse, mocking himself of the thunder and lightning? I tell thee, ganache, that still waters run deep, that l'eau qui dort is the most dangerous, and that the great art of capitalists consists in never appearing to have any money. My uncle from Basle was a capitalist. In the commerce of grains he acquired millions; yet to look at him thou wouldst not have thought that he had possessed two red liards to rub one against another. What, yet another game at dominoes? Come, then, phenomenon of temerity, and I will play thee for the third chopine."

On a particular morning which it is desirable to fix in the reader's mind, Jean Baptiste Constant was breakfasting at the Café Restaurant Chesterfield, and he had company. Three sat down to breakfast with him. He had first invited the patron Rataplan to be a partaker of the meal, and the third guest was a florid well-looking gentleman enough, with very large black whiskers, now slightly inclining to grey, and who was very gorgeously attired in a frogged and braided surtout, and a cap with a tassel of gold bullion. This gentleman spoke most European languages with equal fluency, and with equal incorrectness. He was a travelling courier by profession, and his name was Franz Stimm.

The three men had evidently taken a copious meal of oysters, omelette, and cold roast beef, washed down by English bottled stout (few foreigners who have visited England, be it for ever so short a time, surmount the predilection they acquire for the brown beer of Albion) and some of Rataplan's best red wine. They were now at the stage of coffee, brandy, and cigars, and were unmistakably enjoying themselves.

"I did not like de goffees zo much as de joggolates," Mr. Stimm observed, between whiffs of his very powerful cigar; "de joggolates is più graziosos, and besser vor the stomjacks; but de zigares is not goot mit de joggolates nor de gocos, and de goffees tastes him besser."

"You are always talking of your stomach, friend Stimm," Constant observed. "I wish you would talk to me about that little girl you met, ever so many years ago, on board the Boulogne steamer, when you were travelling with your general."

"Vat vor it is goot to talk about de liddle gals?" replied Franz Stimm, with a sigh. "We shall not none of us never see her again. She goms like de shadow of a liddle vairy, and, pouf! she go away like dis ring of dobbacco-smoke dat go up do de zeiling and vade avay nobody can say vere de debbel vere to."

"And yet all of us would give thousands, millions—at least, much that is valuable to us," continued Constant, "to meet that child. Child! she must be grown into a woman by this time."

"And a peautiful ones, too," interposed the courier. "She was the angelikest liddle zylphide mine eyes ever did light itself upon."

"For the child," Rataplan said, "that!" He snapped his fingers as he spoke. "I have no more children, and care little to hear about them. Yet would I give something to find that woman. The tigress! the fury! the abandoned creature, lost to all sense of morality, honour, decency, virtue."

"She owes you money, Papa Rataplan." This was from Constant.

"Twenty sovereigns sterling. She never paid her bill the last time she descended at the Hôtel Rataplan. It is a flagrant injustice. It is an infamy. She defrauded, swindled me, out of my dues. She had the finest vins of Champagne, and of the little wines of Burgundy. She owes me even for the cigarettes she smoked, the depraved and epicurean bacchante! Her flight without discharging my addition was the last act of perfidy to which, in a perfidious and shameless land, the miserable Rataplan had to submit. But I will be avenged. I will demand justice. Yet shall the tribunals be seized of the details of this most tenebrous and scandalous affair. I desire to re-enter into my funds. I demand the provisional arrestation, the prise de corps, against this woman sans foi ni loi." And Rataplan struck the table with his clenched fist, and filled himself another petit verre.

"You are taking la goutte too early, Papa Rataplan," Constant said, discreetly withdrawing the decanter of cognac from the excited landlord's reach. "Suppose we finish these libations and take a walk."

"Vid all my hearts," Mr. Stimm acquiesced, rising. "My heads is strongs enough for much more gouttes, but we gan dake them in de open airs, and Franz Stimms can then have the bleasure of reciprocifying dis most gharming hospitalities. Gom and smokes in the oben air, and we can talk about de liddle gals. Blezz her liddle heart."

"But the establishment," pleaded Rataplan, nervously.

"The establishment," said Constant, gaily, "can be left to the waiters and the dame du comptoir for an hour or two. The Café Restaurant Chesterfield won't run away. Allons, messieurs, I am at your service."

"Gom and dalk about de liddle gals," repeated the courier.

IN (AND OUT OF) THE DANISH CAMP.*

It is said that travellers are of all people those who most dispense with ceremony, and that under no circumstances is acquaintanceship so rapidly made as on a journey. This is a mistake; you more completely abandon ceremony and form acquaintanceship much more rapidly on the field. You know men, if I may so express it, before you have seen them, and you yourself make equal demands of good-fellowship from others. What soldier, or officer indeed, stands on any ceremony in asking from a comrade, even when meeting him for the first time, the help which he needs at the moment, be it in the form of a drop of brandy, a cigar, a sheet of

* See page 269.

letter-paper, pen; nay, even amongst officers, the loan of money.

Not long since, for instance, when I was standing writing in my only room, an officer entered, a perfect stranger to me, mentioned his name, and gave in the most frank manner the reason of his being there.

"I have not been out of my clothes for several days," said he, "nor have had a chance of making even the most needful toilet. I have now an hour at my disposal, and hearing that a brother-officer had his quarters here, could not resist the desire of entreating your hospitality."

"With the greatest pleasure," I replied. "Make yourself quite at home. Quick, Peter! Fetch water, soap, a towel, and everything else."

My stranger friend was soon in full career, and I continued my writing. When he had done, he found coffee and bread-and-butter set before him. He had a piece of cheese of his own, which he added to his meal. Then we separated, perhaps never to meet again.

What more natural than that we should turn to each other for such small services with the entirest good faith? But, of a truth, we should look in vain for the same good-fellowship in trivial every-day life.

Now let me give you a sketch of

OUR OLD HEAD-SURGEON.

I had lately occasion, under very sorrowful circumstances, to visit him. He was not personally a stranger to me, for I had formerly served in the same regiment with him; but it seems that I understood very little of his real character. I knew him only as a taciturn disagreeable old fellow of a crabbed temper; so much so, indeed, that I had already said, "He is a pretty kind of doctor to send into the field!"

Now, however, he appeared to me quite a different man. There was an animation in his eye, a kind of magnetic life, I might call it, which electrified, as it were, all who came under its influence. He was now exactly in his proper element, moving about amongst the wounded, who were being constantly brought in. I never before saw the mere situation perform such a miracle on a man. Heart, human sympathy, tender compassion, and true religion, together with the keen insight and experience of his profession, seemed to rule every thought and action, and to give expression to his countenance. One of the assistant-surgeons, who saw my combined astonishment and admiration as I watched his movements, whispered in passing, "Is it not a wonderful transformation?"

I stood beside a poor fellow who had just been brought in severely wounded by a ball in the breast. His eyes ceaselessly followed the old head-surgeon. There was a straining anxiety in his look which I interpreted as fear of death, and a presentiment of its near approach. After a little while, the old surgeon came up to the wounded man. In a moment he cut off his uniform, and laid bare the terrible wound. The poor fellow stared wildly in his face without a word. The doctor stroked his cheek tenderly, and said, "Be of good courage, my child!"

The wound was very speedily dressed.

"Is it a dangerous wound, doctor?" asked the poor soldier, in a tremulous voice.

"Pray to God, my son, and He will help thee!" said the surgeon, in a voice that, seeming to come from another world, touched the most holy chords of the innermost being.

It seemed as if the anguish of his death-stricken soul were at once dispersed. A profound calm stole over his features. He pressed warmly the hand which the surgeon put forth towards him; a moment later clasped his own in prayer, and his spirit had departed.

It was impossible for me to conceal my emotion. A tear of tender compassion was in the veteran's eye also, but the next moment he was busy with another wounded man.

There was at no great distance a poor fellow, frightfully injured in the lower part of the face, who could not speak, yet was most anxious to attract the doctor's attention, but his turn to be attended to was not yet come. The ambulance soldiers were bringing in the wounded, and the old surgeon, sending a rapid glance along the ghastly rows of bleeding and death-like men, showed no preference. This poor fellow, therefore, had to wait.

In a few seconds, however, he was kneeling by his side, the wounded man making frightfully ineffectual efforts to speak.

"Don't exert yourself, my son," said the doctor; "I perfectly understand you. Now, quietly shut your eyes and take a moment's rest. Be assured of my being beside you, and of my neglecting nothing."

The poor fellow was, as it were, magnetised. All his disquiet was gone. He closed his eyes, but he never more opened them in this world.

A soldier, whose thigh was fearfully shattered, had, in the mean time, been brought in and placed on a mattress. The wounded limb had already been partially dressed and bound up, but the blood still flowed on every side. He lay bemoaning his fate.

"Unfortunate man that I am! I shall lose my leg! Oh, what a misfortune!"

The old surgeon was by his side. As soon as the poor fellow saw him, he exclaimed,

"Oh, Mr. Head-Surgeon, I shall lose my leg!"

The doctor, without a word, rapidly uncovered the limb and examined the wound. I watched him. He put his forefinger to his forehead, and seemed to meditate for a second or two. After that, he poured out a little brandy, and said to the despairing man,

"Who told you that you would lose your leg?"

"The under-surgeon, who dressed it, sir, told me so," replied he.

"But I am the head-surgeon," returned the good man, "and I tell you that you shall *not* lose your leg—I promise you you shall not."

"But—I feel it," moaned the poor fellow;

"the wound is too high up—I feel that it is very bad."

The good surgeon took his hand, and said:

"I am an old man and an old doctor. You may perfectly depend upon me. Be calm, that is all, and you shall not lose your leg. I promise you—nor will I leave you just at present. But you must be calm. Now, pray to God! Your mental disquiet makes everything worse."

The poor fellow grew gradually tranquil, and thanked God.

I heard the following day that in the evening cramp had come on, and he died, but he was peaceful to the last.

On a field of battle a surgeon of the soul is equally important, though less thought of, than a surgeon for the body. But blessed is he who is equally skilful for both, like this old Danish army-surgeon.

THE WHITE CAPS OF UPSALA.

One of the later great events of Stockholm has been the visit of the students at Upsala. These young men, two hundred and thirty in number, desirous of showing their sympathy with Denmark, have come hither and given three very successful concerts.

Their arrival had been talked of for some time, therefore last Thursday, when towards noon the steamer from Upsala came in, crowds were waiting to welcome them—in a small way it was like the Garibaldi ovation in London—and, accompanied by the enthusiastic populace, they proceeded from the steamer to the palace, in the court-yard of which they gave an opening serenade, after which the king and the new Duchess of Dalecarlia went down to welcome and to thank them. After this they proceeded to the statue of Gustavus Vasa, this being the anniversary of some great event in the life of that favourite national hero.

This little ceremonial concluded, they were severally conducted to the different families who had already made known their willingness to receive them, one family alone entertaining ten. At six the same evening their first concert was given, and the second at the same hour on the following day; but as I was only at the last, which took place at noon on Saturday, I shall speak merely of that.

It must be understood that, in the mean time, enthusiasm for the cause of Denmark was fanned into a perfect flame by the singing of these young fellows, and that the little city, whether or not it was excited enough to march out in a body for the defence of its Scandinavian sister, was, at all events, perfectly wild to obtain tickets for the concerts.

These concerts were given in St. Catherine's Church, which stands in the south suburb. It is a large building, as, indeed, are all the churches here, and as there are but few, the deficiency in number seems made up by their ample dimensions. This of St. Catherine, being one of the largest, is capable of holding between two and three thousand persons. Its interior, in the form of a broad cross, without pillars, and with a spacious centre dome, is well adapted for the accommodation of large public assemblies. Unless the churches here were made use of for such purposes, I know not how a vast number of people could be accommodated; for we have no Exeter Hall, and the Bärs-sal, or Exchange, in which the New-Year's ball and other festivities are celebrated, is hardly large enough for these occasions.

The Swedes, although they may be a very old branch of the Scandinavian family, have a great deal of youthful blood in their veins, and, at the same time, a vast amount of patience. The throng bent on purchasing tickets for these concerts was so great as to form one densely-struggling mass, extending from the opera-house where they were sold, into the adjoining square. On all hands you heard the fear expressed that there would not be room in the church for all who desired to be there, and also remarks on the high price at which the tickets were sold:—two riks-dollars, less than half-a-crown, which would have been thought wonderfully cheap in London. But, dear or cheap, all Stockholm was mad about buying them.

Two hundred students composed the choir, the remaining thirty acting as stewards, and most attentive and kind they were. Seats were found for all the ladies, and during the interval of the performance, decanters of deliciously cold water with glasses were carried round and offered to the whole audience. That portion of the nave which contained the altar was appropriated to the singers, who seemed to occupy nearly a fourth of the church. The organ-loft was filled by the royal family, and the remainder of the church by the people. When the two hundred voices burst forth, they sent a thrill through my whole being, for, unaccompanied by instrumental music, the voices themselves were like a grand organ or well-appointed orchestra.

The programme contained the words of all the songs, fourteen in number, and the concert was divided into two parts. Those songs were principally Swedish, but there were Danish and Norwegian; also a few German, and one French piece. The third song, a version of the well-known German student-song,

Was ist der Deutschen Vaterland?

was wonderfully fine, and perhaps better than anything else gives the spirit of the concert:

What is the Scandinavian's land?
Is it Svealand?* is it Throndeland?†
Or where the blue Sound's waters play
Round Copenhagen fair and gay?
Oh yes! yes, yes! All—all is Scandinavia!

What is the Scandinavian's land?
It is a great, a tri-une land!
Where'er the northern tongue is known,
One heart beats in the north alone;
One blood, one hope, one tri-une band
Unites the Scandinavian land!

One are we; one in heart and will;
Oh God! defend Thy work from ill!

* Sweden. † Norway.

And call forth from our youthful race
The heroes of their father's days,
Then—come what may of loss or gain,
One Scandinavia we remain!

They also sang Bjärne Bargane's March: a very popular, spirit-stirring air, with martial words by Rundurg. I knew the tune well, from often hearing the two sons of my landlady sing it to their mother. She sometimes makes little musical attempts herself. I once heard her send one of her boys for the air of Villikins and his Dinah, with some Swedish version of the song.

I was delighted with a pleasant rural picture, the Bridal Procession on Hardanger Fjörd. I wish it were possible to give a translation of this lovely picture-song, with its imagery of the summer-day sun shining on the sparkling waters of the fjord, the mountains piercing the blue sky, the verdure and joyousness of the scene, all clad, as it were, in holiday attire, to welcome the procession that is bringing home the bride: whose attendants sing the while, a sweet pastoral chorus to the ringing of the bells of the little church that stands on the receding promontory.

Very different to this was the first piece in the second part—a drum-march—in which the lines

Fire! and carry off the fallen,
Clear the deck, and sweep it clean!

produced almost a sickening effect, reminding me of what a veteran blue-jacket told me was the most awful moment to him in a naval engagement: the moment when the deck was strewn with sawdust preparatory to the bloodshed of the encounter.

These songs were followed by the sweetest little Folk-songs, some Norwegian which I wish I could give here: so full are they of the spirit of those half-mournful pictures of strong earnest northern life, both in-doors and out, which we all saw and enjoyed in the International Exhibition.

I do not wonder at the enthusiasm of the Stockholmers on this occasion, for, independently of the intention, which was a very popular one, the spirit of the whole was more than national, and seemed to embrace the entire Scandinavian north as one great nation. These concerts were entirely successful in a money point of view: realising about eighteen thousand riks dollars, weighing a quarter of a ton.

Of course, for days afterwards nothing was talked off but the young fellows whose white caps, frecking the yet wintry streets like sunshine, were a very pleasant sight. Wherever you went you saw white caps; white caps calling on acquaintance; white caps seeing the lions of Stockholm; white caps driving out by themselves, or being driven out by their entertainers to places of resort. White caps mingled with the crowd which assembled to gaze on the Royalties when they really made their long-expected, but long-delayed, spring appearance on Whitsun-eve, in their customary drive to the park. There was but one shadow to the pleasant sunny picture of the visit of the white caps, and that was, the quantity of punch which many of them drunk, and which certain wise and sober people mourned over considerably.

THE GRUMBLETON EXTENSION LINE.

Two or three years ago a great discovery was made, which took everybody by surprise. Grumbleton had been for centuries famous only within the bounds of its own parish. But the world learned suddenly that Grumbleton was great.

For some months before this happened, a number of suspicious-looking fellows—so Drowse called them—were prowling about the parish wanting to see the tithe map, asking leave to make extracts from it, wanting to know the acreage from the tithe award, and generally how much Grumbleton would grow per acre if well farmed. Besides going to the vicar, they were observed counting the haystacks and the corn-stacks, and the number of milk-cows on some of the dairy farms, and one man testifies that he was asked how many pigs he kept. That was the finishing stroke to a series of impertinent questions. The Grumbleton farmers believed them to be outward signs of a conspiracy of landlords for the raising of their rents, and so, after abusing the intruders to their hearts' content—and that is not saying a little—they caught them in the middle of a clover-field one fine morning in spring, and broke two or three heads, as well as one thing called a theodolite, and thus, as they supposed, effectually quelled the mischief.

Upon this, Grumbleton got great credit for its enlightened public spirit, and was talked about in all the country towns within as many as twenty miles. But what was our surprise at finding the vicar, and Grobey, and Stobey, and the whole pack of the magnates of the parish, fraternising with a number of people, one of whom was recognised as the man whose head was the worst broken in the mêlée aforesaid! This occurred in one of the committee-rooms of the New Houses of Parliament. Drowse was holding one of the county members by the button-hole, while the other men were giving evidence on behalf of the "Grumbleton Extension Railway!"

Nor was this all. We never knew our worth, but let concealment, like a worm in the bud, &c. "The land, if well farmed," said our friend, who had a bandage still on his forehead, "would produce twice as much as at present, and be worth, when means of uniting Grumbleton with the metropolis were given by the proposed line, *double the rent*." All the landowners thought that man with the broken head a martyr and a patriot. But our old farmer Jogglehead, who shot the theodolite with a blunderbuss that had not been fired for thirty years, and whose house was to have the line right through it, fairly danced in the committee-room with rage and fury when he heard all the

particulars of his own income from land concisely stated. Jogglehead had come to give counter evidence, but, when his turn came, all he could demand was to know how the rogues got at his ledger, and till this question was answered, he would not utter a word one way or the other, except some that were spoken of as very unparliamentary language. So nothing could be made of him, and he returned to Grumbleton to make arrangements for the worst grievance and trouble he had ever heard of, and that was the giving up of his old tumble-down tenement, and removal to a handsome and substantial farm-house which the company built for him.

But Drowse and his principal parishioners went home with a new light. They saw—for had it not been stated in evidence?—that Grumbleton would become a favourite place of residence for London merchants and City men, who would go daily to and fro between Grumbleton and London on their business. They heard, too, for the first time, that the fine clay in Grumbleton would be the means of giving a valuable trade to the town; and there was abundant proof that what everybody had hitherto known as a dirty yellowish-looking gutter, would, by help of the Grumbleton Extension Line, become a famous chalybeate source of wealth; that, in fact, the great public would flock to Grumbleton to drink out of that gutter.

Accordingly, there was a wonderful reaction, there was a rush for shares. The singular generosity and public spirit of the directors and railway contractors were evinced by the readiness with which they facilitated our neighbours' labour to possess shares, and even at the very last moment, when the line was opened, they got rid of every one of their shares at a premium. The vicar headed the people, all promising themselves—and the company never contradicted them—eight per cent for their money, and a prospect of double that amount. The prospect still remains somewhat distant, but still there it is, and meanwhile our dividends are about an eighth per cent, which, as Drowse says, is a difference, certainly.

Still we have got our railway, which brings us within an hour or so of the metropolis. Somehow or other, however, the metropolis has not yet cared very much about being within an hour or so of us. We had an express, but it seldom put down any passenger at our station: so seldom, that such an arrival was an event, and the passenger was looked at and talked about for the rest of the day. We had a dozen other trains backwards and forwards, but not many passengers, and the house built in the neighbourhood of the chalybeate spring is yet unoccupied. That gutter was bought by a company, and made to flow in a conduit, like one of the London drinking fountains: the water all coming out of the mouth of an angel with wings, which was said to be emblematical. And the New Hotel Company is in the Bankruptcy Court at this very time. I will relate something about our villa residences by-and-by, when people come to live in them, but a picture of them is hung up at all the stations on the Grumbleton Extension line.

What with embankments slipping, and a bridge or two falling, and the permanent way not proving permanent, but settling itself after any change in the weather, the express has a fine time of it, running off the line, so that it is a mercy nobody is killed, and would be a marvel, only nobody but the officials travel by it. What with all these and other misfortunes, it is a matter of mystery how the Grumbleton Extension does manage to pay that half-crown interest on every hundred pounds sunk in it.

For, there are great difficulties besides speculative ones. The express had no sooner come out of one of the tunnels (there are seventeen in all between London and Grumbleton, "A good deal like each other," says Drowse), than the brickwork came out as well, and, as the superincumbent soil was fine sand, it choked the tunnel like a snowdrift. So the company was obliged to get a new contractor to patch things up a little, and paid the bill by creating some new shares, and raising the fares from Grumbleton to London to the same figures as those of the old stage-coach. Though it is right to add that the return fare is cheaper than going and returning by the Regulator.

It is only justice to the officials to say that they do their duty as well and as earnestly as it is possible for men to do it, who have to learn by daily experience what that duty is. Being on new lines, with no money but what could be borrowed, the company mostly took for its servants men who had never been in a station before, excepting when their desire was to get out of it as soon as they could. Still, they looked very well in their new uniforms, and but for a pretty general sprinkling of arms in slings, and here and there a station-master on crutches, and porters with bandages on their wrists (signs of the little accidents that had occurred to them while learning their business), you never saw a better looking staff of officials. For the first six months or so, they were exceedingly polite even to the ladies, and would carry carpet-bags without so much as thinking of sixpence for the trouble.

But the rolling stock! The engines, old four-wheelers which panted, and joggled, and jumped almost anywhere in frosty weather, but couldn't pull a train against a head wind, how they used to break down to be sure! In a drizzling rain, sanding the rails was no use: the driving-wheels could not get up to bite the sand. Still, when they got the steam well up, and there was not much wind ahead, these locomotives would run along pretty well, especially down the inclines, and the contractors took care to leave as many inclines as they could. There was the Achilles, which brought the parliamentary, "she was always scrumptious at an incline," her driver said, "and would make for the fields at the curve, if he didn't keep her very steady."

The carriages were pretty tolerable, and well cushioned, which was a good precaution in case of accidents. For, as Drowse remarked, "if one

must tumble, it is better to have a cushion to tumble on;" so he always went first-class, but avoided the express, because punctuality was aimed at by that train. And what is the good, he would ask, of aiming at what you can't hit, and running the risk of being killed into the bargain?

The recommendations of the Grumbleton juries—and from their experience they are entitled to great weight—would fill a volume; but nobody takes much notice of what juries say over and above their verdicts; one thing, however, Grumbleton may boast of: it has nearly ruined the "Accidental Kill and Cure Society." When the line was opened, everybody took a sixpenny insurance ticket, but the society has long ceased to permit any agencies on our line, and has forsaken us for other quarters, where they can make money without extra risk.

Certainly a good many of the public have been killed, and a good many more have been wounded; but this was to be expected, as the public always pays in the long run, money or life, for railways and their doings. But still the Grumbleton Extension has had a hard time of it, owing to the lawyers and the doctors, who have been persuading the credulous public that people have nervous systems. Drowse would never believe in nerves, until he was present at a trial where a man, whose nerves were shaken by the down train running off the line, and performing a pas seul in the meadow while the engine and tender upset in the river, obtained two thousand pounds damages, when his footman, who had both legs broken, was considered very lucky to have his case settled out of court for fifty pounds.

But the accidents and the actions, the repairs to the road and rail and the rolling stock, the salaries to the servants, the rebuilding of the stations, to say nothing of setting farm-buildings and ricks on fire, and running through the gates every now and then, and also killing stray cattle which break through the fences and get on the line, do keep us good folks of Grumbleton in a state of continual lively excitement. Yet, with all these dangers and drawbacks, public confidence in the ultimate success of the line is unabated, and a belief in its safety steadily increases. This, says Drowse, ought to be the case; for at first it was no uncommon thing, on examining the wheels at the Grumbleton station, to find a round dozen of them faulty; but now—he states on the authority of the man who taps the wheels with a hammer—there are seldom more than two or three cracked wheels in any train, even in frosty weather, and these are, generally speaking, in old third-class carriages, which do not signify. When a cracked wheel is discovered, the official always marks it with a bit of chalk; and it is a singular fact, and worth inquiry, that the worst accidents on our line have happened by the breaking of sound wheels, while the cracked wheels do their work well.

If the company could only raise money enough to buy a few good engines to pull us Grumbleton public against a head wind up an incline, without bursting, or so much as snapping a conducting-rod, I believe we should soon begin to prosper. But we offered seven per cent for some money last year to an insurance company, and the secretaries laughed at the bare idea of the proposal, though it is clear enough that it would be worth our while to borrow it at ten per cent, though it were only to diminish the number of actions with which our company is being continually galled.

Our hope in the ultimate success of the line lies in the conduct of the shareholders and their friends. They have imbibed the belief that everybody requires change of air, and the consequence is, that season tickets begin to be general. Now that the shareholders spend quite a little fortune in support of this new theory, there is, it must be admitted, an excellent chance for the company, and the last annual report concludes in these hopeful terms:

"After all the unforeseen difficulties which the company has encountered, your directors believe, with confidence, that the worst is over, and that, with the efficient and experienced staff of the company's servants, the Grumbleton Extension will speedly become what it deserves to be—a most valuable connecting link between Grumbleton and the Metropolis."

LAURENCE STERNE.

By all means let us hear the best of our much-abused friend Laurence Sterne. In committing himself to two volumes of lively biography, bright, liberal, and very interesting, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald testifies his friendly bias to the human as well as to the intellectual side of the great humorist; for, to become the biographer of a man of genius for the sake of raising him upon a gibbet, is to carry into literature the taste of an amateur hangman. Enough has been said, some of it we think not unjustly, to the discredit of Sterne's life. Now let us know the best of it, following a biographer who, as far as may be, will see Sterne's life and character reflected in his works.

The author of Tristram Shandy was born in the south of Ireland, in the barracks at Clonmel, on the twenty-fourth of November, in the year seventeen 'thirteen. In Clonmel barracks lay at that time the Thirty-fourth Regiment, in which his father, Roger Sterne, was ensign. There was a branch of the Sterne family naturalised in Ireland, but Roger belonged to the Sternes who were at that time a good old Yorkshire family, settled some at Kilvington, and some at Elvington. Ensign Roger's grandfather, Richard Sterne, had been a noted Archbishop of York, who had thirteen children, and benefited himself so far by his preferment in the Church as to leave a fine estate at Kilvington to his eldest son, another Richard. Another of the archbishop's sons, Simon, married the heiress of Elvington near York, and it is this son who had Roger the ensign for the youngest of his seven children.

Ensign Sterne, when with the army in Flanders, married Agnes, the daughter of a Mr. Nuttall of Clonmel, a rich sutler or contractor for army provisions, and the lady was the widow of a Captain Hebert, or Herbert. The marriage took place at Bouchain about two years before the birth of Laurence, his sister Mary, fifteen months older than himself, having been born at Lisle during the interval. Ensign Sterne's regiment, which had remained in Flanders until after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, came into barracks at Clonmel just before Laurence's birth, his mother having arrived from Dunkirk only three days before that event. Except two, all regiments raised since the peace of Ryswick, the Thirty-fourth one of the number, were then being remorselessly broken and disbanded at the close of war, and, said Sterne afterwards, "my birthday was ominous to my poor father, who was, the day after our arrival, with many other brave officers, broke and sent adrift into the wide world with a wife and two children." Ensign Roger was in no desperate case. He took his wife and her two little ones to Yorkshire, and dwelt with his mother, who was then a widow, in her house at Elvington, having Corporal Butler, an Irish orderly of the disbanded regiment, for his attendant. Ensign Sterne was, says his son Laurence, "a little smart man, active to the last degree in all exercises, most patient of fatigue and disappointments, of which it pleased God to give him full measure. He was in temper somewhat rapid and hasty, but of a kindly, sweet disposition; void of all designs, and so innocent in his own intentions that he suspected no one; so that you might have cheated him ten times a day, if nine had not been sufficient for your purpose."

In less than a twelvemonth the Thirty-fourth Regiment was again established under Colonel Chudleigh, and rejoined by Ensign Roger and his family at Dublin barracks, whence they were, within another month, shifted to Exeter, a third child, a son, Joram, who lived only five years, being born during the journey. After a year in Exeter, the regiment was ordered back to Dublin, where it remained stationary for the next three years. Here Ensign Sterne, who had, as well as his wife, moneyed connexions, and may have had means of his own to dissipate, instead of living in barracks upon his ensign's pay of three shillings and twopence-halfpenny a day, furnished a large house, and, says his son, "in a year and a half's time spent a great deal of money." During the year at Exeter and the three years at Dublin there was no addition to the little family, but when the soldier went from Dublin with his regiment to take part in the Vigo expedition, Mrs. Sterne, whose youngest boy had died of small-pox on the way from Plymouth to the Isle of Wight, was consoled two days after the sailing of the expedition with a daughter, who was christened Anne. This girl, however, like the brother who preceded her and the brother who was next born, died before reaching the age of four. The sixth child was a girl, who did not live a twelvemonth, four frail infants thus perishing between the births of the first two children, Mary and Laurence, and the last-born, Catherine, so that these three of the seven were all who reached maturity.

Upon his return from Vigo Bay, Mrs. Sterne and the little family rejoined the ensign, then stationed with his regiment in Wicklow barracks, Laurence then being a boy of seven. There the child lived among the soldiers, and might take in with his earliest impressions, if he would, from his father and the corporal who was his orderly (or from anybody else), images that were shaped afterwards into Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim.

But during six months of the time spent here, the Sterne family was housed hospitably in the vicarage of Anamoe, seven miles from the town of Wicklow, with the Rev. Mr. Fetherston, a relation of Laurence's mother. At Anamoe young Laurence tumbled into a mill-race, was swept under the revolving mill-wheel, and shot out on the other side, unharmed, into smooth water. He tells this of himself as "incredible," and we do not learn without some trace of suspicion that precisely the same story is told of the boyhood of his great-grandfather, the archbishop. The mill-race, at any rate, is still to be seen at Anamoe.

When the regiment went presently for a year to Dublin barracks, the Sternes lived in barrack. There the boy "learned to write, &c.," and the little Anne died. Her brother afterwards recollected her, and said of her, "she was of a fine delicate frame, not made to last long, as were most of my father's babes." The regiment was next quartered at Mullingar, where there was again a relation—this time one of the Sterne family—who took the little household in and entertained it for a twelvemonth. A couple of posts from Mullingar is Port Arlington, where a Lefevre, whose son had a commission in the army, set up a French school. In this fact some have seen the first hint of Sterne's Le Fever.

After a change to Carrickfergus, the Sternes came back with the regiment to Wicklow, whence Ensign Roger, having got leave of absence from his colonel, took his son Laurence, then eleven years old, to the Halifax Free Grammar School. For the head of his family—Roger's eldest brother, Richard Sterne of Elvington—was resident also at Woodhouse, a mile and a half from Halifax, and one of the governors of its grammar-school. Here, therefore, Laurence was educated during the next seven years of his life. At the close of the seven years, his father, the former ensign, then Lieutenant Sterne, died of yellow fever at Jamaica, after having escaped death from a sword-thrust in a duel, and the lieutenant's rich and kindly brother Richard, of Elvington, says Laurence, "by God's care of me, became a father to me."

Laurence Sterne's mother was alive seven-and-twenty years later, and her life seems to

have been troubled, but except that he once met her in York and trusted that some trouble of hers was ended, there is little to tell us, for good or bad, what place she occupied in the mind of Laurence Sterne.

By his uncle Richard, Laurence was sent to the college — Jesus College, Cambridge — of which Richard's grandfather, the archbishop, had been master, and which the archbishop had enriched with foundations and benefactions. In the course of his first year Laurence's education was put upon an economical footing, on the ground, doubtless, of his orphanhood, by his entry as a sizar on the sixth of July, seventeen 'thirty-three. His Uncle Richard had died in the preceding October, and Richard his son, Laurence's cousin, about six years older than himself, inheriting, not Woodhouse, which was left to a son by a second marriage, but Elvington, with a chief share of his father's wealth and all his good will to Laurence, became thenceforth answerable for the expenses of his education. So at the university Laurence Sterne "spent the usual number of years; read a great deal, laughed more, and sometimes took the diversion of puzzling his tutors. He left Cambridge with the character of an odd man, who had no harm in him, and who had parts, if he would use them." At Cambridge, Laurence Sterne commenced his friendship with John Hall, afterwards John Hall Stevenson—the Eugenius of Tristram Shandy. Here, also, Sterne made his first acquaintance with another most familiar associate of after years, that affection of the chest which showed itself in constant cough and the occasional spitting of blood. Sterne matriculated in March, seventeen 'thirty-five, took his degree as B.A. in the following January, and was ordained deacon in March, seventeen 'thirty-six. His ordination as priest followed two or three years later, when his age was not quite five-and-twenty.

Besides the eldest brother Richard, Roger Sterne had an elder brother Jaques, who also survived him, and who, like Richard, was ready to help, as he could, Roger's orphan son. Laurence's uncle, Dr. Jaques Sterne, a Whig and a strong Protestant, was, at the time when his nephew entered the Church, canon residentiary, prebendary, and precentor of York Cathedral, and rector of two small livings in the East Riding. Eight years later he became archdeacon of Cleveland, and he died archdeacon of the East Riding of Yorkshire.

The young clergyman then, the Reverend Laurence Sterne, came home from the university to York, where his Uncle Jaques, as precentor of the cathedral, had a residence, and his cousin Richard was at Elvington, within a five-mile walk, or in the season occupied the town-house of the Sternes in Castlegate. And now it was that Laurence Sterne met a clergyman's daughter who was making a long stay at York, Elizabeth Lumley, daughter of the rector of Bedal in Staffordshire. After a two years' courtship, Miss Lumley went back to Staffordshire, leaving Laurence sentimentally disconsolate. When presently she returned to York, it was with broken health; she was believed to be a dying victim of consumption, and under that impression told her "Laury" that she should not live to be his, but had made a will leaving all that she had to him. She had forty pounds a year in her own right, if not more. By this time Laurence was, in the world's eyes, settled in life. His ordination as priest preceded only by five days his induction into the vicarage of Sutton-on-the-Forest, named from its position on the edge of the Yorkshire forest of the Galtrees, which then extended all the way to York. Two years afterwards he took his degree of M.A., and in the following year got one of the best prebend's stalls in York Minster, which gave him, with the dignity and prospect of promotion, forty pounds a year and a house in Stonegate. Upon this he married. It was in seventeen 'forty-one that he got his stall, and it was on Easter Monday of that year that, according to his own entry in his parish register at Sutton, "Laurence Sterne, A.M., Vicar of Sutton-on-the-Forest, and Prebendary of York, was married, by the Reverend Dr. Osbaldeston, Dean of York, to Elizabeth Lumley, the 30th day of March, 1741 (being Easter Monday), in the Cathedral, by license."

Of Mrs. Sterne, who before marriage had been the object of her husband's sentimental ecstasies, the worst that Mr. Fitzgerald can suggest as excuse for her husband's subsequent neglect of her—a neglect that he clearly shows to have been greatly exaggerated by the world—is that a crayon portrait recently discovered gives her a disagreeable face, and that although she had a fine voice and a good taste in music, "she is like to have settled down into a plain, well meaning, orderly, humdrum sort of housewife; excellent for school-work, for cottage-visiting, for marketing, for sweeping up, and weekly washings; excellent as a social labourer of life, yet, unhappily, with a literal turn of mind, and on which her husband's brilliant rockets might explode harmlessly, quite unfelt and unappreciated." Just the sort of faithful home-cherishing wife, in fact, that the man of genius most needs, weds if he can, and whose value he of all men in the world usually most appreciates. At Sutton, Parson Sterne was not on good terms with the squire of his parish, and was not liked among his people, but some families of good repute held fast by him. He amused himself with playing the bass viol, painting, writing, and occasionally shooting, looking to his fruit and vegetables, and his hay. His sermons were very short; the weakness of his lungs made that an unavoidable condition. Preaching, he said in 'sixty-two, "which I have not strength for, is ever fatal to me; but I cannot avoid the latter yet." If his sermons, however, were short, they were boldly natural and practical, often dramatic in their tone, always home spoken, religious even when in mood upon the verge of laughter, and of a sort always to seize on the attention of his hearers.

In the year following that of Sterne's marriage

a daughter was born, and named Lydia after Mrs. Sterne's favourite sister. This daughter was baptised on the day of her birth, and buried on the day following.

Next year the prebendal stall and small living of Stillington, with forty-eight pounds a year, fell vacant. Stillington is but two miles from Sutton, and Sterne had the preferment from Lord Fairfax, in whose gift it was, and with whose family the Sternes had a marriage connexion. Mr. Fitzgerald believes that Lord Fairfax, who had estates in Kent, was "the friend in the south," who is said to have promised Miss Lumley, before her marriage, that if she became the wife of a Yorkshire clergyman, he should have, when it fell vacant, a Yorkshire living that was in his gift.

At this time Sterne's college friend, Stevenson—Yorick's Eugenius—was lord of Skelton Castle, near Guisborough, and this place became, under its Shandean name of "Crazy Castle," the Vicar of Sutton's second home. Hence Stevenson, who was one of the shameless fraternity of the "Twelve Monks of Medmenham," issued his indecent "Crazy Tales." In the library at Skelton the vicar—who was known among the jovial souls of Crazy Castle as "The Blackbird"—could pasture at will on French Anas and Facetious Histories. Here he fastened upon Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, great furnisher of second-hand erudition, not to a Sterne only, but to a hundred men who have aimed, as Sterne did not, at a cheaply-earned repute for scholarship. Here were all the other books that gave its flavour of curious out-of-the-way reading to Tristram Shandy. It was even here, too, that Sterne read Don Quixote and the Essays of Montaigne, and had a host enthusiastic as himself for Rabelais.

At this time also there practised at York a Dr. Burton, Fellow of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, who is said to survive yet as the Dr. Slop of Tristram Shandy. Dr. Burton, who had studied abroad and been a pupil of Boerhaave, was an accoucheur and an antiquary, and in each character he wrote a book, his unpublished antiquarian work being a folio called the Yorkshire Monasticon. He died at the age of seventy-five, in the year seventeen 'seventy-two. In the small political world of York, Dr. Burton was at war with the ultra-loyal Whigs, to whose party Laurence Sterne and his uncle belonged. During the troubles of 'forty-five, Dr. Jaques Sterne, as a local magistrate, contrived excuse for clapping Dr. Burton into prison, sending him to London, and causing him to be kept nearly a year in custody. For it had been said that the Highlanders—in the days before Culloden—were come as far as Kendal, and Dr. Burton, who had estates with some hundred and twenty pounds of loose money lying by the Yorkshire road, got leave to go out and secure his property. He went, was captured, set free, and returned to York, when Dr. Sterne most zealously improved the occasion to the hurt of his political antagonist. For this he was afterwards reprimanded by Lord Carteret. But it was with Jaques Sterne that the Duke of Cumberland, when on his way through York after the battle of Culloden, chose to take up his lodging.

Against Dr. Burton and others, Dr. Sterne, the uncle, fought by newspaper paragraphs that he expected Laurence to be ready at all times to take his share in writing. Uncle and nephew quarrelled over this work, and to this cause alone the Vicar of Sutton ascribed a feud which arose and lasted to the uncle's death in seventeen 'fifty-nine, a few months before the publication of the first volume of Tristram Shandy. "He became," says Laurence Sterne, "my bitterest enemy." Clearly, however, that is not the whole truth, for Laurence Sterne speaks of the younger of his surviving sisters, Catherine—who was eleven years younger than himself—as being "most unhappily estranged from me by my uncle's wickedness and her own folly." The only light we get upon these family matters is from Horace Walpole, whose words Mr. Fitzgerald does what he fairly can to soften: "I know, from indubitable authority, that his mother, who kept a school, having run into debt on account of an extravagant daughter, would have rotted in a jail, if the parents of her scholars had not raised a subscription for her. Her own son had too much sentiment to have any feeling. A dead ass was more important to him than a living mother."

Presently, about two years after the birth and death of his first child, Laurence Sterne became the father of another Lydia — the daughter who survived him—born and baptised on the first of December, seventeen 'forty-seven. It was the year in which also, for the first time, a work of his appeared in print—a charity sermon—with Elijah and the Widow of Zarephath for its subject. This was followed by the assize sermon, preached in York Cathedral, which, seven or eight years later, Sterne gave to Corporal Trim, "who held the sermon loosely, not carelessly, in his left hand, raised something above his stomach, and detached a little from his breast," for delivery to the critical ears of Dr. Slop, Mr. Shandy, and Uncle Toby. "Can the reader believe that this sermon of Yorick's was preached at an assize, in the cathedral, before a thousand witnesses ready to give oath of it, by a certain prebendary of that church?"

"Setting aside," says Mr. Fitzgerald, "any exemplary observance of the special duties of his profession, which, in his age, were not popularly expected, the whole current of Mr. Sterne's life and manners was tinged by sentiment. Here is his amatory profession of faith: 'I must ever have some Dulcinea in my head; it harmonises the soul.'" So, at the age of six-and-forty, with a wife and daughter at his Sutton vicarage, Mr. Sterne found his soul harmonised at York by Miss Catherine de Fourmantelle—a young French lady, of an exiled Huguenot family. Her elder sister had conformed to the religious tests which enabled her to enjoy the family possessions; while with her mother at York lived the Catherine to whom

Mr. Sterne wrote fervently as "Dear, dear Kitty," "I love you to distraction, Kitty, and will love you to eternity!" The first of the notes to her, with a present of Calcavella, is signed "Yorick;" and it was about this time that Tristram Shandy was begun. Of his wife he wrote to his Kitty, "I have but one obstacle to my happiness, and what that is you know as well as I;" "God will open a door when we shall some time be much more together." He sent sweetmeats to his Kitty, and he sent her his charity sermon, because he found in her something of the tender and compassionate nature of Elijah.

A humorous and metaphorical account, by Sterne, of a cathedral squabble over "a good warm watch-coat"—some small question of preferment to a patent place, in which a Dr. Topham, described by the name of "Trim," a name presently put to better use, was the greedy mover of discord—was on the point of publication, but laid by unpublished at the close of the dispute; while Tristram Shandy, begun early in the year seventeen 'fifty-nine, was being rapidly produced. His "vile asthma" was still troubling him, and he had been trying Bishop Berkeley's tar-water. It became known in his own part of the world that he was "busy writing an extraordinary book." "Till you read my Tristram," he wrote to Mrs. Ferguson, "do not, like some people, condemn it. Laugh, I am sure you will, at some passages."

The first instalment of three volumes—at the end of which the hero was not even born—being finished, the book was offered for fifty pounds to Dodsley, who declined it. Sterne, when he could not sell, offered to pay the cost of print and paper in a "lean" experimental edition, cutting away provincial allusions, and so recasting the work as to make the satire general. In this state it first came out at York. Its price was only five shillings, Mr. Dodsley's name in the London advertisement followed that of the local publisher, and it formed two miniature pocket volumes, which came out at the end of December, in the year seventeen 'fifty-nine. It was advertised in London only once or twice, but Miss Fourmantelle wrote to commend it strongly to the attention of an influential London friend, and a draft of it found among her papers in Sterne's handwriting shows that the author of the lady's letter was the gentleman himself, who was described therein as having "a great character in these parts as a man of learning and wit." A few copies had been sent to town in January to meet the demand at Mr. Dodsley's, but by the middle of the year a new edition was required, and the Yorkshire parson, who had himself followed his book to London, where he arrived early in the spring, became the lion of the season, Garrick being the first and the most cordial of those who took him by the hand. Rapturous accounts of the honours paid him by "your great people of the first rank," including "all the bishops," were sent by Sterne to his dear, dear Kitty. His wife, who saved all his letters, had not a line to show that he made her a sharer in his happiness. Mr. Fitzgerald more than half believes those who attributed to Warburton at this time the bribe of a purse of gold to Sterne, to save himself from being lampooned. To this story there is no reference in Mr. Watson's recent life of Warburton, that gives, as Mr. Fitzgerald also does, the text of letters of friendly admonition written by Warburton to Sterne at this period. But we must not discuss. We can here give only the dry skeleton of that strange piece of life which Mr. Fitzgerald clothes with its own flesh, and into which he sets the warm blood flowing. From Lord Falconberg, Sterne got, at any rate, a perpetual curacy at Coxwould, not twenty miles from Sutton, that fell vacant in this first season of his lion-hood. It was worth a hundred a year, and it was this which made him say in exultation to his Kitty, "I have but one obstacle to my happiness now left, and what that is you know as well as I."

Not many weeks later, dear Kitty arrived in London. Sterne saw her on a Sunday afternoon, wrote hurriedly in the middle of the week that "every minute of his time was so pre-engaged, &c."—might meet her on Friday—"I beg, dear girl, you will believe I do not spend an hour where I wish, for I wish to be with you always; but fate orders my steps, God knows how, for the present." Mr. Fitzgerald knows and tells us how. Fate took him "to balls, parties, visits, dinners, a fortnight deep, Ranelagh, and the Drury-lane coulisses. This is our last glimpse of dear Kitty. The car of Mr. Sterne swept by her."

For Mr. Sterne was in a flurry of heart content. There was a new game of cards called Tristram Shandy. There was a Shandy Salad. There was a "Tristram Shandy" horse in the Irish steeple-chases, and in Dublin cheap pirated copies of the book were sold for sixpence.

The second edition of Tristram, with a frontispiece by Hogarth and a dedication to Pitt, was followed almost immediately by two volumes of Sermons of Mr. Yorick, adorned with a print from Sir Thomas Lawrance's portrait of Sterne; Dodsley paying for the new edition and the sermons four hundred and eighty pounds. Goldsmith and Johnson shrunk instinctively from the new star of the dinner-tables; but Gray found him to be a good man in his sermons. As for Johnson, "A lady asked the Doctor how he liked Yorick's Sermons. In his rough blunt way he answered her, 'I know nothing about them, madam!' Later on, the subject was renewed, and he then censured them with much severity. The lady, who had not forgotten his plain reply, sharply retorted: 'I understood, sir, you had not read them.' 'No, madam,' roared the sage, 'I *did* read them, but it was in a stage-coach; I should not even have deigned to look at them had I been at large.'" Garrick, who had been the first to welcome Sterne to town, did not retain a good opinion of him, but said "he degenerated in London like an ill transplanted shrub. The incense of the great

spoiled his head, as their ragoûts had done his stomach."

From London Sterne did not return to Sutton. Finding a curate for that parish, he went to reside at his own new curacy of Coxwould, which he spoke of as "a sweet retirement in comparison with Sutton." There were few parishioners, and there were fine friends within reach. He gave his parsonage there the name of Shandy Hall, and wrote in it, within the next twelvemonth, the third and fourth volumes of Tristram, wherewith, when done, he again made his personal appearance to enjoy the flatteries of his success among the Londoners. The dinner-table was his paradise, and for about five weeks he never dined at home. Dodsley paid three hundred and eighty pounds for this second instalment of Tristram, which was received with equal parts of censure and applause, each of the strongest. At this time Sterne's map of his future life was to enjoy every year the London season, and spend the rest of the year at home in his parish, racing through two Shandy volumes. To Stevenson, after his next return to Coxwould, Sterne wrote that he should have broken the fall from London to country dulness by walking about the streets of York for ten days. "I have not managed my miseries like a wise man; and if God, for my consolation under them, had not poured forth the spirit of Shandyism into me, which will not suffer me to think for two moments upon any grave subjects, I would else just now lay down and die."

Two or three days before the next Christmas appeared the third pair of volumes of Tristram, issued by new publishers. The story of Le Fever was among the best of their contents. Sterne paid the usual visit to London, but he was now much weakened by the disease of his lungs, and a journey to the south of France was planned. He set out first, and his wife and daughter were to join him at Paris.

In Paris, too, the famous Yorkshire parson was made much of in the salons as a new sort of lion, and was in ecstasy at "the delights of this place, which in the savoir-vivre exceeds all the places, I believe, in this section of the globe." But he was not at this time unmindful of his wife and their young daughter Lydia, who was an inheritor of his asthma or consumption. He supplied them freely with accounts of his adventures, and sent regularly to his bankers for the letters of his wife. He provided carefully and affectionately for their journey to him. When they joined him and he got to Toulouse, the new experiences yielded matter for the seventh volume of Tristram. Mrs. Sterne's care in the south of France was as much for the health of her daughter Lydia—probably, too, for her own—as for that of her husband; and for her daughter's sake she stayed at Montauban, he watching carefully over her supply of money, when Sterne himself returned to England.

So the year ended, and the usual yearly instalment of Tristram appeared only a few weeks after time, in January, seventeen 'sixty-five, containing recollections of his travels, and the episode of Captain Shandy's love. There was the usual London season also to enjoy. This time the Yorkshire parson fell into sentimental love with, and wrote a strange love-letter to, Lord Percy's wife, a daughter of Lord Bute: "Though I had purchased a box-ticket to carry me to Miss ——'s benefit, yet I know very well, that was a single line directed to me, to let me know Lady —— would be alone at seven, and suffer me to spend the evening with her, she would infallibly see everything verified I have told her."

Before next winter, his cough and severe spitting of blood warned him southward, and he proposed travelling to Italy, and calling by the way upon his wife and daughter at Montauban. The tour that followed was the basis of the famous Sentimental Journey. That he might have time for this new work, he wrote that year but one volume of Tristram, the ninth, and, as it proved, the last. His wife was ill, but though widely parted from her, he was attentive to her comfort, and wrote also many letters of playful affection to his daughter Lydia.

With the ninth volume of Shandy, Mr. Sterne made his usual personal appearance in London society. There appeared also some more sermons by Mr. Yorick. It was at London in this season that Sterne met a young married lady, Mrs. Eliza Draper, about five-and-twenty years old, whose husband, a counsellor at Bombay, had sent her home to England with her children for the safety of her declining health. Of this lady —his Eliza—Sterne's mind was full when he was writing his Sentimental Journey. She was Bramine, and he her Bramin. He made no secret of his new sentimental passion—with Sterne in these matters there was a great deal more vanity than vice—and news of it was taken to his wife, then at Marseilles, who said only that "she wished not to be informed." When the lady's husband wrote for her to return to India, Mrs. Draper went down to Deal to wait for the signal of embarkation in the Indiaman there lying, and it was then that Sterne wrote to her the love-letters which have been translated into almost every European language. He bade her arrange them in chronological order, and sew them together under a cover. "I trust they will be a perpetual refuge to thee from time to time, and that thou wilt (when weary of fools and uninteresting discourse) retire and converse an hour with them and me."

Some City friends had warned the lady against Sterne, and he, resenting this, was desirous that after her departure she should not write to them, and thought he had effected his purpose, as he said to one of his friends, "by a falsity which Yorick's friendship to the Bramine can only justify. I wrote her word that the most amiable of women" (his one good motherly friend, Mrs. James) "reiterated my request that she would not write to them. I said, too, she had concealed many things for the sake of her peace of mind, when in fact this was merely a child of my own brain, made Mrs. James's by adoption, to enforce the argument I had before urged

strongly." In one of his letters to the Bramine he wrote: "Talking of widows, pray, Eliza, if ever you are such, do not think of giving yourself to some wealthy nabob, because I design to marry you myself. My wife cannot live long; she has sold all the provinces in France already, and I know not the woman I should like so well for her substitute as yourself." Too much stress must not be laid on this poor fooling. His last letter records the breaking of another blood-vessel. Then he wished to have his wife near him and his daughter, "child and darling of his heart."

After slight recovery, a relapse was followed —not for the first time, according to the murderous practice of the doctors in that day— with free blood-letting. So, from his lodgings in Bond-street, Sterne's sick body was carried to Yorkshire, "like a bale of cadaverous goods," where his health greatly improved. To his wild friend Hall Stevenson he wrote, with a touch of the earnest feeling then in his heart, "I have never been so well since I left college, and should be a marvellous happy man but for some reflections which bow down my spirits; but if I live but even three or four years, I will acquit myself with honour; and — no matter! We will talk over this when we meet." He was busy with the writing of his Sentimental Journey, and was taking pains to keep its spirit pure.

Next September, Mr. Sterne went to Scarborough for ten days' sea-bathing. He was the guest there of an Irish bishop. At the end of the month, he met at York his returned wife and daughter Lydia; who did justice, he thought, to her mother's care of her, and proved "an elegant, accomplished little slut." He was to go to London at Christmas with his usual Christmas book. While he was in town, Mrs. Sterne and Lydia were to be housed at York; and in the spring mother and daughter were to return to France, where Lydia had had some "advantageous offers" of marriage.

Before starting for London, a fresh attack of illness weakened Sterne in body and in mind. But he bade farewell to wife and daughter—not knowing that it was a last farewell—and delivered himself up to the gaiety of London. On the twenty-seventh of February, seventeen 'sixty-eight, were published, in the usual form of two little books, sold for five shillings, "vols. i. and ii. of a Sentimental Journey through France and Italy." This work was meant to be continued annually, in the place of Tristram. But in the next March, Sterne had a pleurisy, for which he was three times punished with blood-letting by the doctors. And at last, the doctors killed him! He died on the eighteenth of March—nobody by but a sick-nurse, and a footman sent up from a neighbouring dinner-party to inquire how Mr. Sterne was. Three days before his death, he wrote to Mrs. James, the one good woman who was his most trusted friend in London, "If I die, cherish the remembrance of me, and forget the follies which you have so often condemned—which my heart, not my head, betrayed me into. Should my child—my Lydia —want a mother, may I hope you will (if she is left parentless) take her to your bosom? You are the only woman on earth whom I can depend on for such a benevolent action."

Sterne's body was carried to its grave in "the new burying-ground near Tyburn," followed by a single mourning coach, in which were two gentlemen—one of them his publisher. Almost immediately after burial, it was disinterred by the resurrectionist, and recognised presently, when its dissection was almost complete, upon the lecture-table of the Cambridge Professor of Anatomy.

Sterne died involved in debts, which his wife parted with her own small fortune to pay. A handsome subscription for his wife and daughter was afterwards made on a Yorkshire race-course; but their narrow means pressed on them heavily. Seven years later, Mrs. Sterne was dead; and Lydia was married to a Frenchman.

SAXON HAIR-DOCTORS.

"Your 'air is getting very thin on the top, sir. You'd find it very advantageous to use our Treble X Cytherean Extract, which will entirely remove the dandriff, and cause the short 'airs to grow long. You will also derive great benefit from our Medicated Balm of Paphos, which is of unparalleled efficacy in moistening dry 'eads of 'air." So says the modern hairdresser, who generally has some wonderful theory about the causes of baldness. We met with one who attributed it entirely to "the acids," which his "Arabian alkali" would effectually neutralise. Unfortunately, this ingenious gentleman broke down in cross-examination, proved himself to have a very vague idea of the nature of acids in general, and was utterly unable to explain what were the particular acids that destroyed the hair. Nevertheless, we bought a bottle of the "Arabian alkali," with the view of making experiments. Two strips of litmus-paper bore evidence, firstly, that the alkali was not alkaline; and secondly, that it was not acid. In short, it was merely coloured and scented water, which probably has a beneficial effect when applied to dirty heads. Another of the fraternity advocated the cutting cure, probably because the public has become somewhat sceptical about oils and washes. He, too, had a theory: it was a mistake, he said, to suppose that when the hair fell it came out by the roots; nothing of the kind; it broke off in the middle, and split up towards the root, and if not cut, a hair thus unfortunately divided against itself, left only to itself above the surface of the skin, this strip had, to the naked eye, the appearance of a fine but perfect hair. Miserable delusion! it was only a remnant, which might, by the constant use of the scissors, be induced to become a perfect hair. The application of the theory was not difficult. In the first place, you ought to

have your hair cut regularly once a week; in the second place, this cutting operation ought to be performed by the author of the theory, who alone knew how to turn a strip into a cylinder.

Sometimes, too, in a moment of weakness, a family doctor may be induced to prescribe for falling hair. He does it cautiously. "Mind," he says, "I don't say it will be effectual in your case, but it is undoubtedly the best thing known for making the hair grow. Last year I had three young ladies under my care, who were terribly frightened about their hair, and it's now thicker than ever." You cannot fail to have faith after this, especially seeing that the doctor himself is bald, so you apply the remedy (tincture of cantharides and acetic acid, most probably), which, if it does not turn your hair grey, proves as effectual as any of the other remedies.

But it seems that in all times ladies and gentlemen losing their hair believed in the possibility of a remedy, and where there was a demand there was, of course, a supply. The Ediths and Rowenas of the Saxons consulted their doctors about their hair, and so did the Julias and Æmilias of the Romans before them. The treatment was rather different in those days, but probably not less successful than that of our time. We may doubt whether the Lady Rowena put her hair in curl-papers; we may be sure she went to bed with her nose full of sowbread, serenely confident that she knew how to keep her hair on her head. "In case that a man's hair fall off, take this same wort (sowbread), and put it into the nostrils," says Apuleius. He adds soon afterwards: "It also is well beneficial for heart-ache;" possibly he might have said, with equal truth, for "the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to." But, in any case, it is no small thing to know how your hair may be made to grow, and your heart cured of its aches, by one and the same remedy.

But not content with acting upon the hair indirectly through the olfactory nerves and brain, Apuleius and the Saxon leeches occasionally recommend local applications. They mention especially water-wort. "If a man's hair fall off," they say, "take this same wort, pound it in oil, smear then the hair therewith, it soon becometh fast." The assertion is rather vague as regards time, especially when we consider that the Saxons were a patient people. We are more precise in these days: "a month's trial will suffice to convince the most sceptical of the infallible virtues of the Pommade Philocome;" and "we need ask the afflicted to buy no more than one bottle of the oil of the Esquimaux chiefs."

Again, we read of hop-trefoil: "Also this wort is efficacious to make either men's or women's hair grow." On reading this, one might have a horrible suspicion that, unless the fact is specially mentioned, the prescription which will make a man's hair grow will not necessarily make a woman's hair grow. One can hardly suppose that even mediæval leeches would be so selfish, so wanting in consideration to the sex, as to study the art of restoring their own hair and that of their male friends, while they were careless about the hair of their sisters and their sweethearts, to whom an unimpaired head of hair was of infinitely greater importance. Fortunately, we have succeeded in obtaining evidence on this point from an old Saxon chronicler not very well known either to the public or to professed antiquaries. The watercress remedy prescribed by Apuleius, is mentioned by this old Saxon chronicler in such a way as to leave no doubt that where any mode of treatment was recommended for a man's hair, a woman's hair was included. "In case that a man's hair fall off," says Apuleius again, "take juice of the wort which one nameth nasturtium (nasturtium officinale), and another nameth cress; put it on the nose; the hair shall wax (grow)." It is worth while to remark, that in the case of this remedy, as well as of sowbread, the action seems to be indirect. There are, doubtless, people in existence who would laugh at the idea of applying to the nose a herb intended to act upon the hair. But it must be remembered that cerebral disturbance has a very powerful effect upon the hair, sometimes turning it white in a single night, as in the (doubtful) case of the Prisoner of Chillon, at other times causing bare patches upon the head, which, if not looked to in time, lead eventually to total baldness. It seems therefore most reasonable to suppose that any action upon the brain might be expected to have an effect upon the hair. Through the orifices of the nose an effect may be produced upon the olfactory nerves, which would immediately stimulate the brain and probably make the hair grow. The experiment is really worth trying.

To return, however, to the proof from the Saxon chronicler that women are included when men are spoken of, Niewand* tells the following story:

The Lady Rowena feared much that her lovely locks of flaxen hair were falling and becoming thin. When next she saw her father confessor, she said unto him, having first talked of many other things, "Father, my mind much misgives me that my beauty is about to depart from me."

"How so, my daughter?" said the confessor; "methinks thy mind is not set upon heavenly things, as it should be."

"Father, have I not confessed unto thee, and answered all thy questions; and can I forget thy skill in leechcraft, and in all knowledge? Oh, father, tell me what must I do to save my hair, thou who knowest a remedy for all things."

"There is a remedy for that, as for all other ills; thou hast but to apply it, and thy hair is saved."

"Tell me, tell me, father, what is it!" she

* About 1045 A.D. Date not ascertained with precision.

cried, and her blue eyes danced with pleasure and with expectation.

"It is simple and it is sure," said the confessor; "thou knowest the wort called cress, or, as others name it, watercress?"

"I do," answered the Lady Rowena; "I like it much, both with butter and with cheese."

"Good!" said the father. "Thou shalt take thereof, at even, ere thou liest down to rest, and shalt rub thereof upon thy nose, first with thy right hand and then with thy left hand, and when both hands are weary, then shalt thou call unto thy tiring-woman, and she also shall rub upon thy nose. Thus shalt thou do every night."

"Oh!" said the Lady Rowena, very slowly.

"Thou likest not the remedy?" asked the confessor.

"But——" began the Lady Rowena, and stopped short.

"Say on, my daughter."

"But, father dear, will not the rubbing of my nose cause a redness thereon, or peradventure tear the skin thereoff?"

"I know not, my daughter; peradventure it may, but it will restore thy hair."

"Oh! what *am* I to do?" asked the Lady Rowena, in despair.

"What thou wilt," answered the confessor, sternly.

"But, father, if I do as thou biddest me, how soon will my hair be fast again?"

"I bid thee not; do what thou wilt; thy hair will be fast again when it shall please God."

Then the Lady Rowena began to weep, and threw herself at the father confessor's feet, and entreated him, saying,

"O father, be kind unto me, for I am wretched."

And the confessor stooped down to raise her, and she put out her hand, and lo it came upon the crown of his head, and it was smooth like unto a billiard-ball.* And the Lady Rowena was astonished, for she knew that, when hair has been shaved off, the skin is rough and unpleasant to the touch, and she said unto him,

"Why, how is this, father confessor? I thought it was only the tonsure which made bare the crown of thy head, and lo thou art bald. Where are thy watercresses, O father confessor?"

Then there was a redness in the confessor's face, as of a fire reflected therein, and he answered unto her, and laid his hand upon her head, and said unto her,

"Fair daughter, the vanities of this world are naught unto me. God gave me my hair, and God hath taken it away again. But thou, wherefore dost thou repine? Thy hair is thick and fair to look upon. Fear God, and be good, and all shall be well with thee and with thy bright locks."

* Curious proof of the antiquity of the game of billiards.

And the Lady Rowena went on her way rejoicing.

Do thou likewise, O reader, when hairdressers would make thee nervous.

THROUGH THE BLOCKADE.

"Phillips, something must have happened to the governor. I've been watching the clock ever since eleven. It is almost half past. He has never been five minutes after time in all the twenty-seven years that I have been a clerk here."

So said the elderly cashier, and I could not but admit that the occurrence was unprecedented, though my own experience in the firm was short in comparison with that of the first speaker. Mr. Trent, second partner in the old-established banking-house of Follett, Trent, and Co., was punctuality itself. He chiefly managed the business, since we saw little of our nominal principal, the first partner, whose working days were past. And during the five years for which I had been in the employ of the firm, I had never known Mr. Trent to be absent from his post. Any deviation from routine on the part of a methodical man of business is apt to startle his subordinates, and it is not surprising that while Mr. Griffith and myself were shaking our heads over the non-appearance of our chief, the juniors should be venturing on rash conjectures, ranging from apoplexy to insolvency. But these guesses were abruptly checked by the sudden arrival of Mr. Trent himself. He came in with a hasty step, and I thought, as he passed by with a nod and a civil word of greeting to the bank parlour, that he looked ill and harassed. Almost immediately he sent for me.

"Mr. Phillips," said the banker, speaking in a nervous fidgety manner quite unlike his usual calm decision of speech and bearing, "I have something to ask of you—a service—a favour, in short, for I am sensible that this is not at all in the way of regular business duty—in a word, would you go to America to oblige me?"

"Certainly, sir," I replied, at once. "I have been there before, if you remember, to attend the winding up of that Wall-street firm, three years since. If it is your desire that——"

But here I was interrupted.

"I want much more than that, Frank Phillips," broke in my employer, speaking with unwonted excitement, "more than I have a right to ask of you, and more than I would ask of any of your companions, except, perhaps, Griffith, who is too old, and we have been good friends out of business hours, you and I, and—and I knew your father, Frank, and knew you before you left Charterhouse, so I think I may rely on you in this sad business."

And then Mr. Trent proceeded to explain. The service he required at my hands was strictly of a private character, and wholly unconnected with money matters. The banker, as I was vaguely aware, had an orphan niece to whom he

was greatly attached, and who had for some years been married. This lady resided abroad, somewhere in Italy, to the best of my knowledge, and her husband was an American gentleman from one of the Southern states, and the owner of sufficient property to enable him to live in Europe with his English wife. But I was now to hear, for the first time, that on the outbreak of hostilities Mr. Bolton had found it impossible to withstand the call of patriotism, that he had hastened across the Atlantic to take service in the Confederate army, and that he had quieted his young wife's apprehensions by the promise of a speedy return. Many Southerners did the same, obeying the summons to arms with a certainty that the whole dispute would be settled in one short campaign. Among the disappointed was Captain Bolton. Long months went by, and still the war went on, nor did any safe and convenient opportunity for his wife to rejoin him present itself. Blockaded by sea, and guarded by land, the passage of the Confederate frontier was full of risks, especially for ladies and children. Natural anxiety and hope deferred had affected Mrs. Bolton's health and spirits. She had come back from Italy to England, to be nearer, as she said, to her husband when he should summon her to share his fortunes. And at last the summons had come, but it was no joyful one.

Captain Bolton had been severely wounded in a skirmish with some of General Gilmore's troops, then besieging Charleston, and he had expressed a strong desire to see his wife and babes for what might but too probably be the last time. And the favour which Mr. Trent had to ask of me was, that I should undertake the task of escorting his niece and her children on the hazardous voyage to South Carolina. The hazards of which I have spoken of course belonged entirely to the last portion of the route, for the outward run from England to the British possession of New Providence was safe and easy. But between the Bahama Islands and the Carolina coast lay the blockading squadron, and I knew that no trifling dangers and hardships must be risked by those whom love of gain or any higher motive should urge to elude the vigilance of the Federals. Be that as it might, I undertook the commission, and the next packet carried Mrs. Bolton and her two children, under my care, to Nassau, where the real difficulties of the pilgrimage began.

To procure a passage to Charleston, Wilmington, or some other and less known port of the belcaguered Confederacy, was, indeed, easy enough. The bay was full of vessels attracted to that once lonely roadstead by the gainful contraband commerce then at its height. There, at anchor, side by side, lay the bluff-bowed brig that had brought out a cargo of war material from England, and the swift rakish schooner destined to carry on the transhipped freight to a Southern harbour. All the fishing-boats, dories, and canoes, seemed to have been enlisted in the service of plying between the deep-laden vessels and the shore, and the quays were all too small to accommodate the towering piles of clothing and medicine, saddles, sabres, cavalry boots, kegs of gunpowder, and Birmingham rifles, that lay heaped upon wharf and jetty. Streets, landing-place, beach and bay, were all alive with the bustle and stir of a gainful and perilous traffic. Under such circumstances as these, to obtain a passage to the American mainland might have appeared the simplest proceeding conceivable.

Such, however, was far from being the case. I found, by listening to the flying reports that circulated about the town, and which invariably referred to the one absorbing topic of interest, that the blockade was more serious than we in England had believed it to be. Many of the sly low black-hulled steamers, many of the tall-masted schooners and brigantines, that lay awaiting an opportunity to slip off unnoticed, were destined to capture. This was a mere matter of profit and loss, as an old merchant, whose English was made peculiar by the drawling Bermudian accent, explained to me on the second day of our stay at Nassau.

"You see, sir, one cargo in three pays, and one cargo in four saves us from being out of pocket—yes, mister. We count on some loss, we do, but if a clipper has the luck to get twice in with notions, and twice out with cotton, why the Yankees are welcome to her afterwards, hull, spars, and running gear."

"And the crew?" I inquired.

But my communicative friend treated this part of the business lightly enough. The seamen had high pay, and took their share of the risk of being shot, drowned, or blown up, in consideration of extra wages. The captain and mates were allowed stowage for so many cubic feet of European goods, one way, and so many cotton bales, the other, and often had a percentage on the amount realised by a fortunate venture. Success, therefore, meant wealth for the owners and officers, and at least a pocketful of dollars for the foremastmen, and in case of capture there was no danger of anything worse than a tedious and comfortless detention for some months in Fortress Monroe or elsewhere. When, however, I spoke of the probable results of an unsuccessful attempt to the passengers, supposing the latter to be persons connected with the South by descent or adoption, the talkative Bermudian grew serious.

"That," as he observed, "was no laughing matter. Uncle Sam was plaguy vexed with rebels or rebels' friends, and to get out of his clutches, when once made prisoner, was not easy."

And, indeed, I found that the boarding-hotels of the island were crammed with the families of Southerners, longing for a secure opportunity of rejoining the husbands and fathers who, far away in Virginia, Tennessee, or Carolina, were fighting or toiling in the cause of their new-born republic, but afraid to make the perilous plunge. If many vessels came back triumphant, many were taken or destroyed, and most of those that came victoriously in with a welcome freight of costly cotton could show the shot-holes in their

sails, and the marks where Federal cannon-balls had "hulled" them during the fruitless chase.

Mrs. Bolton, my charge, was a timid, delicate little woman, quite unfit to lighten my burden of responsibility by taking any portion of it on herself. She loved her husband dearly, and to reach the couch where he lay wounded, and perhaps dying, she was willing to endure hardships and confront dangers that at another time would have seemed insurmountable to her. But as for any aid or advice in such a matter as running the blockade, I might as well have applied for counsel to her two baby girls, little Lucy and Fanny, as to their mother, my employer's niece. Thrown thus wholly upon my own resources, I spent much time in the preliminary inquiries, and at last comforted myself that I had come to a sensible and practical decision.

The vessel in which I took our passages was a swift-sailing English schooner, the Saucy Jane, of and from Liverpool. A beautiful craft she was, with her tapering masts and fine lines, lying like a duck on the heaving surges of the Nassau roadstead. But her chief attraction in my eyes was the high reputation for seamanship and prudence which her commander had acquired. With his sailing vessel, Captain Harrison had made six successful trips, four to Charleston and two to Wilmington, in the very teeth of the blockading squadron. In each case he had safely delivered a valuable cargo to the Confederate consignees, and had made the run home with a freight of cotton for the Lancashire market, and though chased, had got off scot-free, while fast steamers were daily being sunk or driven ashore. In these bold and dexterous evasions of the Federal fleet the merchant captain had amassed a considerable sum of money, and this was to be the Saucy Jane's last visit to a Southern port, at least with her present commander.

"It's profitable work, very," said the daring young sailor, as he told me of his intention over a glass of wine in his little cabin, when our passages had been definitively engaged and paid for on board the schooner; "but it's too like gambling to suit my taste, and I can't get out of my head that saying about the pitcher that goes often to the well. All I've made in six double trips—a tidy lump of dollars—is aboard the craft now, in the shape of quinine, and negro-cloth, and shoes, and fire-arms, ready to yield four hundred per cent profit if I can swap it for cotton, and as much more if I can land the cotton at Liverpool. And if all goes well, I can cut the concern, and sail to China in a three-master of my own, and Mary Anne and I——"

But here Captain Harrison came to a stop, probably remembering that he had told enough of his private affairs and prospects to a stranger. I took a fancy to this high-spirited young skipper, who was a year or two my junior, but a first-rate seaman, bold as a lion, and by no means as incautiously communicative in his dealings with all the world as he had shown himself with me.

"You see," he frankly remarked, "when a chap's knocked about the world, from port to port, as I have done since I was bound 'prentice aboard the Hood barque, in the Rio trade, he gets to know something of physiognomy. And I saw at once that you were what you represented yourself to be, even before you showed me the letters of credit drawn and signed by your people, that my owners bank with, too, as luck would have it. But, mind you, the island's choke-full of spies. They're about us all day long on one pretence or another, like wasps round a comb of honey. And there isn't so much as a word buzzed ashore that doesn't find its way, by fair means or foul, to that beauty there."

Captain Harrison pointed to a dim speck hovering far out at sea, beyond the mouth of the bay, above which curled a thin wreath of dusky vapour. This was the United States steam-sloop Pocahontas, whose peculiar duty it was to watch Nassau and the ships anchored there. This vessel was perpetually a source of annoyance, not only to the merchants of the place, but also to the authorities. She was fond of lying, with steam up, ports open, and a spring on her cable, near some ship that was notoriously on the eve of departure for the Southern ports. And even now, when in compliance with the governor's peremptory commands, enforced by the presence of her Majesty's ship Fury, she had reluctantly retired to the prescribed limits of one marine league, she remained there as long as her coal would serve her, in hopes of cutting off some would-be blockade runner in the outset of her career.

On shore there were other dangers. Lean, wiry men, with keen features and restless eyes, were constantly to be met with at the bars of the hotels and taverns, from the handsomest hostelries down to the low-browed cabins where coarse Mexican corn-brandy was sold, and these, though loud and blatant as to their Southern sympathies, were nevertheless in constant communication with the American consul. More specious spies, either real Europeans or affecting the garb and speech of natives of the old continent, lurked in the boarding-houses, on the wharves, about the merchants' offices, and beguiled the unwary into conversation on the engrossing topic of the contraband trade. The sailors belonging to the different ships about to sail were so often tampered with, that many captains found it necessary to refuse all shore leave, lest the hour of departure should be signalled to the Federal cruiser lying in the offing, like a vulture on the wing. That she was signalled every night, by some concerted system of lights displayed from house-tops on shore, was no secret to any one in Nassau.

I was by no means the only person eager to avail myself of the opportunity of crossing in the Saucy Jane to the mainland. Several parties, even of the more cautious among the Southerners, had arranged to embark when the

time for sailing should arrive, and the number of passengers was only restricted by two circumstances, one of which was, that the rate of fare demanded was considerable, and the other, that Captain Harrison was strict in his scrutiny of his would-be guests, and declined to encumber his cabins with either "loafers" or suspected spies.

I remember well, on the very day on which we were to go on board and await the land breeze to waft us smoothly out of harbour, under cover of the darkness, that a tap, a hesitating, timid tap, resounded against the panels of my door, the door of my room in Willing's Hotel. I was sitting alone in the wooden balcony, under the striped awning that kept off the rays of the almost tropical sun, meditating, as I discussed my cigar, on the strange nature of the affair in which I found myself engaged. There was a singular dash of lawlessness about the business that contrasted oddly with the usual tenor of our quiet Lombard-street life, and the very idea of having to steal away, secretly and under cloud of night, from Nassau, was anything but agreeable to a man of orderly and peaceful habits. However, I recollected the helpless children and their almost equally dependent mother, for whose safety I was responsible, and I consoled myself with the hope that in a very few days at most my duty would be discharged, and the danger past. I had got so far in my musings when the tap I have mentioned caused me to turn my face towards the door, and in answer to my summons to "Come in," a strange figure presented itself in my apartment.

The intruder was a tall, corpulent old man, in the costume of a Roman Catholic priest, but of so antiquated and grotesque a fashion that I found it extremely hard to suppress a smile as its wearer approached me, bowing and smiling with oily deference. His twinkling black eyes were meekly lowered as they met mine, and from the huge shovel-hat that he carried in one sunburnt hand, the knotted fingers of which were adorned with silver rings, down to the black cotton stockings and square-toed shoes that protected his feet, the visitor might have sat for the portrait of a French village curé of the time of Louis the Fifteenth. And a curé he was, as well as I could gather from the perplexing jargon of mingled French and Spanish, eked out by a few oddly pronounced English phrases, in which he addressed me. His name, he told me, was the Padre or Père (for he used both terms indifferently) Duchochois, Antoine Duchochois, parish priest of St. Gaspard, a village in Louisiana, in that wild region of unhealthy morasses that is called the Bayou Teche country. This district, as I was aware, neither Butler nor Banks had proved able to subdue to the Federal sway, and there my new acquaintance had the spiritual charge of a poor and primitive population, who lived chiefly by fishing and the culture of rice among the swampy fields. Very few of the padre's parishioners, white, red, or black, could speak anything but French or Spanish, for even the seigneur to whom the estate belonged by charter was a genuine Creole colonist of the old stamp, and on this ground M. Duchochois begged me to excuse his ignorance of English, which it was rarely necessary for him to use.

But the poor padre's tale was a pitiful one. He had been on a tour which he called a "quête," and which was, in fact, a prolonged begging excursion on behalf of his needy flock, since the scanty substance of these simple people had been wantonly destroyed by a party of Federal foragers, who had burned all that they could not carry off, and the coasting vessel in which the priest had embarked had been run down by an English brig on its return voyage from Matamoras to New Providence. The captain of the merchantman had done all that could be expected of him in setting the padre ashore at Nassau, and in giving him a few dollars by way of compensation for his slender stock of wearing apparel, which had gone to the bottom of the sea. But poor M. Duchochois was in much perplexity, anxious to get back to his parish and his people, sore afraid of the Yankees, whom he seemed to regard as devouring dragons, and quite unable to raise the funds needful to pay for a passage for himself and his Indian servant-boy, Blaise, to South Carolina. Once there, the curé had no doubt that from priest to priest, and from convent to convent, he could get passed on to his own rustic dwelling-place; but in Nassau, where all were absorbed in the gainful traffic of the hour, and where few could even understand his speech, the unfortunate ecclesiastic was quite at a loss.

In this strait, hearing that I was an Englishman, and reading, as he was polite enough to say, some hope in my face, poor M. Duchochois had come to throw himself on my compassion. Would I kindly use my influence with some ship-captain to convey him and his boy Blaise over to the continent? They would not be troublesome passengers. They would *ranger* themselves, they would creep into some hole or corner on board the ship, and remain as quiet and unobtrusive as mice. They would not ask for anything more than permission to occupy a little space on board the vessel. A little biscuit and a melon or two they could take on board with them—bah! a bagatelle! they should cost the honourable captain nothing for their subsistence. And for their passage the padre would pay in prayers and an old man's blessing, for which, at any rate, M. le Capitaine Anglais would be none the worse. Would I intercede for him?

Now the curé was a grotesque personage in appearance, and he looked inconceivably ridiculous as he squeezed his portly person into a corner of the room by way of exemplifying his intention to "effacer" himself when on board. And when I thought of so fleshy a churchman subsisting on water-melon and dry biscuit, I felt a thrill of the same incredulity as that which was experienced by the Black Knight in Ivanhoe when Friar Tuck began to munch the dried peas.

But I took a liking to the priest for all that, and could not help respecting him for the feeling manner in which he spoke of his tawny parishioners, his "poor shorn sheep," for whose sake he had gone abroad as a clerical mendicant. And I readily promised to use my utmost endeavours to obtain for him the small boon he craved. The priest's eyes filled with tears when I spoke kindly to him. He thrust his hand into the pocket of his threadbare black soutane, drew out a tin snuff-box, and held it to me, open, with a little humble bow and a French grin of thankfulness. I do not like snuff, and it makes me sneeze, but I remembered Sterne and the Franciscan monk at Calais, with his little horn box, and I took a pinch as cordially as I could. And just then a louder tap came to the door, and in bounced Captain Harrison.

The Saucy Jane's captain had come to give me some final instructions on the subject of embarking. We were on no account to come off before dusk from the shore, for though the Federal cruiser had met with some damage to her machinery, and was in harbour and under repairs, a suspicious steamer had been espied to seaward, and it was rumoured that the San Jacinto was off the coast. Seeing that I was not alone, the skipper would have retired, but I begged him to stay, and introduced the padre, with a brief statement of the latter's misfortunes, and a hint that it would be a charitable act to carry him safely across to the mainland.

Harrison knit his brows at first, and keenly inspected the appearance of this petitioner for a free passage, but before long the young sailor's frown relaxed, and it was with a good-humoured smile that he said he would talk the matter over with his steward, and, if a berth could be found for the priest, he would send me word before sunset. In truth, a much more suspicious person than the skipper must have been disarmed by a survey of worthy M. Duchochois, as he stood, the picture of piteous eagerness, with his horn-rimmed spectacles pushed up to his forehead, and with the marks of snuffy tears very visible on his sallow cheeks, his iron grey hair hanging down over the collar of his shabby soutane. Indeed, so childlike and simple was the poor old curé's anxiety to have his boon granted him, that neither Harrison nor I could resist his wistful look, and my exclamation of, "Upon my word, captain, the poor old gentleman must be one of us, if I pay the fare myself," was simultaneouly uttered with Harrison's more genial, "Cheer up, Monsieur le Curé, or whatever you call yourself. You shall be very welcome to a passage aboard us, you and your black boy, and we'll answer for it you shan't have lost flesh by the time we drop anchor in Charleston——Hilloa! what on earth is the man about?"

For the padre, vehement in his gratitude, had caught hold of Harrison's hand and insisted on kissing it in sign of thankfulness, while his polyglot blessings fell thickly on us both. With some difficulty the ecclesiastic was induced to calm his transports of joy, and he left the hotel to return, as he said, to the poor lodging in which he had left his servant, and what few necessaries he still possessed, with the understanding that he was to return at sundown, when he could embark with the rest of the party.

"One word," cried Harrison, as if a sudden thought had occurred to him, while the padre's hand was still upon the handle of the door, "monsieur, pas un mot, keep it dark, will you, about your appointment this evening, do you understand?" But the padre looked as blinkingly unapprehensive of our commander's meaning as an owl in the daylight.

"Plait-il, M. le Capitaine?" he asked timidly, and off came the shovel-hat again. I was obliged to explain in French that the skipper had reasons for wishing the curé to keep his approaching departure a secret from any acquaintances the latter might have formed in the little town, and this M. Duchochois readily and humbly agreed to do, though with no gleam of intelligence in his round black eyes.

"May I go now, messieurs?" said the priest, with another bow, and we exchanged salutations, and parted.

"That parson will never set the Thames on fire, poor old boy!" laughed Harrison, as the curé's footfall died away in the distance. The skipper only stayed to give me some parting instructions as to the particular part of the wharf where we were to embark, rather a more secluded spot than the quay in front of the hotel. Thither our baggage was to be conveyed through the network of narrow lanes behind the wharves, so as to avoid unfriendly observation. And, once past the point where the San Jacinto lay watching for prey, the captain of the Saucy Jane had few fears of a successful termination to the voyage.

How I watched the sun go down on that evening, suffusing the sea with rainbow tints that presently merged into rose colour, deep crimson, and blood-red of the darkest hue, and so abruptly faded out, and left the surface of the water as dusky as indigo. There was very little moon, and though the stars shone out white and brilliant, fog-wreaths came curling over the waters as the land-breeze began to sigh through the rigging of the ships in the bay. As we were cautiously rowed out to where the Saucy Jane lay, with her brailed-up canvas shaking loosely on boom and yard, every flash of the oars elicited a phosphorescent gleam from the gently heaving water. The passengers and their baggage filled two large boats and a dory, and we were among the occupants of the first boat. By we, I mean Mrs. Bolton and her little girls, myself, and the padre and his Indian boy. The last mentioned, a spare copper-skinned lad, dressed in blue cotton, and with a yellow silk handkerchief tied tightly round his lank black hair, like the fillet worn by horse-riders in a circus, sat impassive behind his master, and looked more like a bronze statue

than a living creature. The padre, on the other hand, was full of simple elation and good spirits. He chuckled and talked in his queer jargon, making every one smile, and was evidently overjoyed at his good fortune. Mrs. Bolton—poor little woman—was in a more cheerful frame of mind than I had yet seen her in. Hitherto we had been met by baffling delays on all hands, but now we were fairly off—really "going to Henry at last," as she said; and I heard her murmuring to her little ones that they should "soon see papa, now."

The instant we were all aboard, and had answered to our names as the steward read them off from his list by the shaded light of a ship lantern, anchor was weighed, quickly but cautiously. There was no shrilly piercing fife to encourage the men—no hearty chant of Yo, heave, yo! as the crew went stamping round after the spinning capstan bars. But if the work was done silently, it was expeditiously performed, and as if by magic the broad sails dropped from their festoons, and the gallant schooner, spreading her white wings like an albatross, glided off to seaward. A sigh of satisfaction burst from many hearts as the vessel began to move from her anchorage. Mr. Trent's niece was not the only one on board whose hopes and affections centred in the land towards which our prow now pointed. The breeze was steady, and the Saucy Jane, slightly heeling over in response to its welcome breath, flew through the water at a rate that proved how well she deserved her reputation as a fast sailing craft. Still the utmost caution was preserved. No lights were shown. Captain Harrison conned the schooner himself, nor did his vigilance appear to relax, until, more than an hour after we had left our moorings, he laid his hand familiarly on my shoulder, saying, "All right, now, Mr. Phillips. Do you see that faint blotch of crimson red and yellow, the smoky light three miles off; no, more to leeward? That is the San Jacinto. The Yankees won't make much of us this time, or my name's not Jack Harrison."

And, indeed, a more fortunate voyage, to all appearance, no vessel had ever made. Day after day the weather was beautiful, the sea smooth, and the winds, though light, still favourable. We saw no Federal cruisers. Twice, indeed, we fell in with armed vessels, but these our skipper's experienced eye recognised as British ships of war, even before they drew near enough for the red, white, and blue of the Union Jack to be visible by means of our best glasses. And on one sultry afternoon the cry of "Land, ho!" was raised, and the Southern exiles on board set up a cry of joy, and clapped their hands exultingly, for they knew that the low blue line, like a cloud bank, could be no other than the coast of South Carolina.

Somewhat to the disappointment of his lady-passengers, however, the captain declined to sail into Charleston harbour, as he might easily have done, before sunset on that evening. He knew too well that to make such an attempt would simply be to run into the lion's mouth. We could see no Federal cruiser at that moment, but there could be no doubt that many war vessels of every calibre and class, from the ferry-boat hastily armed with a brace of nine-inch Parrott guns, to the swift steam frigate, lay lurking among the numerous islands that skirt the coast so thickly. It would have been folly to have run the gauntlet through the Yankee squadron in broad daylight, whereas by night the chance of eluding hostile eyes was an excellent one. Harrison knew the entrance to the harbour well; his memory for shoals and sand-banks, for channels and shallows, was remarkable, and one of his crew was a Charleston man born, and well qualified to act as a pilot in his native waters.

The schooner was, therefore, moored, stem and stern, close under the shelter of a convenient islet, a long low strip of sand, crested by palmettoes and overgrown with brushwood, and which intervened between us and the blockading squadron. The sails were furled, the colours hauled down, and the Saucy Jane lay concealed, only her bare masts rising gaunt and indistinct over the tufted trees of the islet. It was confidently believed that the best telescopes on board the Federal men of war would fail to distinguish any trace of our whereabouts, while, towards midnight, we could resume our voyage with a fair prospect of success. The vessel lay in deep water, so close to the shore that a couple of planks were thrust out as a bridge to connect the gangway with the sand-bank, and most of us gladly availed ourselves of the opportunity for a ramble on dry land. Mrs. Bolton, whose spirits had improved as we approached the country she so longed to reach, was one of the group of ladies who visited the islet, where the children were delighted to run and play on the firm white beach, covered with bright shells, and whence terapins and other small turtles floundered hastily at the approach of a human foot, and splashed into the limpid blue water beneath. With this party was the padre, M. Duchochois. This worthy ecclesiastic had become a general favourite on board, thanks to his quaint good nature and amusing eccentricities. People could not help laughing at him, but they liked him, and the children, who teased him a good deal at first, had ended by voting him grand master of their revels.

A curious sight it was, that of a cluster of little boys and girls, unconscious of the peril that might accrue from the neighbourhood of the Federal foes, gathered around the tall old curé, and with eager gestures appealing to him to devise some new game for them to play at. And it was none the less curious to watch the curé himself, as intent on the amusement of the moment, apparently, as his little friends, taking snuff noisily, and volubly chatting in his strange dialect of three languages woven into one. The ladies on board the Saucy Jane, who had at first been somewhat shocked at the uncouthness of this poor priest, now voted him a dear good creature, and a subscription had been already

proposed for the purpose of sending him and his Indian servant-lad home to St. Gaspard. This lad, Blaise, whom the children had dubbed Man Friday, was a taciturn boy, like all his race, but evidently attached to the priest with an almost canine fidelity. He was seldom far from his master, but on this occasion he was not, as usual, ready to hold the large red-cotton umbrella over the head of M. Duchochois, a ceremony which he often gravely performed on deck.

Meanwhile, several of the male passengers, with Captain Harrison, sat smoking their cigars in a shady nook of the islet, screened from the sun's rays by the long drooping leaves of the feathery palmettoes overhead, and almost walled in by thickets of the oleander, the nopal, and the prickly pear, gorgeous with large red blossoms. Everybody seemed happy and hopeful. Suddenly the captain sprang to his feet, with a fierce oath that died away into a shout of anger:

"Hilloa! on board there. Who did that?"

One of the mates, lounging half asleep over the taffrail, looked up with surprise at the sound of his commander's voice.

"Look alive, there! Who loosed that sail?" cried the captain.

And, as we all glanced upwards, we saw, to our astonishment, that the maintopsail of the schooner was loose, and heavily flapping to and fro in the freshening breeze, like the broad wing of some wounded sea-bird. It needed but a glimpse of Harrison's look of wrathful dismay, as he sprang on board and gave his orders—orders that instantly sent three or four seamen scrambling hurriedly up the rigging to reduce the sail—to assure us that mischief was afoot. In a very short time the fluttering canvas was close reefed, but to discover the offender who had cast the sail loose was less easy. In vain the captain sternly interrogated such of the crew as had been on deck. All declared that they knew nothing of the matter. One sailor, who had been dozing under the bulwarks aft, did, indeed, say that he had opened his eyes a few minutes before, and had, while in a state between sleeping and waking, seen some one jump out of the standing rigging, and slip down the fore-hatchway. And it was his belief that this person was no other than the padre's boy, Indian Blaise.

But Blaise was found fast asleep in his lair below, and he did not seem even to understand what was said to him when he was asked, in French, whether he had been aloft lately. He shook his head in dissent, however, and indeed no one had ever seen the Indian ascend the rigging, or believed him capable of getting high enough to loosen the sail, even if there had been any comprehensible reason for such an act on his part. The most natural conjecture was that the sail had been carelessly secured, and the captain's only hope was that the tell-tale canvas had not attracted the eyes of any sharp-sighted look-out man on board of a Federal ship. And as hour passed after hour, and no column of smoke rose black against the darkening violet sky, giving token of the unwelcome approach of an enemy, we breathed more freely again, and all looked forward to breakfasting in Charleston itself. The sun went down sinking into a bank of grey clouds, and there were signs of a probable change of weather, but still the sea was calm. We were all aboard again, supper was over, and the lights were extinguished, and the passengers in their berths, somewhat earlier than usual. The deck was left to the watch, and as the schooner's bell told off the hours we knew that the time for sailing would soon arrive. I was lying, half dressed, on the tiny bed in my little cabin, when I heard a voice say, in a husky, smothered tone,—"Not yet! Japh! I see one of the Britishers leaning over the side, forward. Keep in the shadow."

And then followed a gentle splashing sound, and a faint tapping against the planking, as if some boat or canoe were being guided along the schooner's side by the joint force of a paddling oar and a human hand that grasped the woodwork of the vessel's side and drew the boat forward. Of this I should have thought little—nothing was more likely than that a boat should have been lowered for some purpose connected with our getting clear of the sand-banks and sunken rocks that were numerous in our immediate proximity—but the words were suspicious, and the voice was wonderfully like that of the good old priest, M. Duchochois. For a moment I hesitated as to whether I should seek the captain or one of the mates to communicate what I had heard, but the more I thought of the matter the less certain was I that I had caught the exact meaning of the speaker. I had been drowsy and only half awake, and the very notion that the curé had been the owner of the voice was a manifest absurdity that made me consider the whole affair unworthy a second thought. I listened, but could hear nothing, and soon sank into a real slumber.

I was awakened by the quick tramp of feet overhead, the word of command, the rattling down of coils of rope upon the deck, the quick wash of the surging water along the schooner's sides. Evidently sail had been made on the Saucy Jane, and we were heading for Charleston harbour. I got up, threw on my upper garments, and went on deck, where I found two or three of the male passengers. They were talking together near the stern with excited gestures, but in cautious tones. As I drew near, I caught the words "the boat," and at once asked if anything had gone wrong.

"Yes, Mr. Phillips, the dingey's missing," said one of the Southerners, a tall Georgian, who bore the title of major; "it was the only boat towing astern, as you may have noticed, all the others being on board. Just before sailing it was found to have disappeared, though in what manner——"

"Captain Harrison suspects," interrupted another; but he was interrupted in his turn by

the captain, who came quickly up, and said in a voice that shook with suppressed anger:

"There's treachery afoot, gentlemen. The plugs have been removed from the bottom of every boat, and not an oar but has been sawn through just above the blade. Some rascally traitor must——"

"Sail, ho!" sung out a sailor from the masthead. "A large ship on the weather bow."

"Sail, ho! a steamer to leeward!" called out the look-out man in the bows.

The captain started, sprang into the rigging, and took a hasty survey of the probable enemy. As he did so, the red flash of a cannon-shot lit the darkness of the night, and the bellowing report followed sullenly over the waters.

"Down helm, you! put her about! smartly, now, my lads!" shouted the captain; but another flash succeeded, and down came the schooner's mainboom, mainsail and all, thundering upon the deck, knocking down and bruising several of the crew, while a third shot crashed into the deck, and made the white splinters fly. Escape was impossible in our crippled condition. We backed the topsails, and in ten minutes more a large dark steamer had ranged alongside. We were immediately boarded by a powerful force of armed seamen and marines, and declared a lawful prize to the U.S. steam-sloop Susquehannah.

By the light of the battle lanterns we were all paraded on deck as prisoners, when what was our amazement at recognising in the lieutenant who commanded the boarders no less a personage than the curé of St. Gaspard, the Rev. M. Duchochois. Yes, there could be no mistake about it. The shovel-hat and shabby soutane and horn spectacles had been replaced by navy blue cloth, a gold-laced cap, and a belt, in which a revolver balanced the cutlass that hung on the left side, but the crafty black eyes were those of our late protégé, though the expression was wholly changed.

"Yes, gentlemen; ladies, your humble servant," said the spy, with a sneer of triumphant malice; "old Papa Duchochois, very much at your service in his new capacity of lieutenant in Uncle Sam's navy, you rebel greenhorns."

And, indeed, the villain, for the part he had played in practising on our compassion was to enable him the better to betray us, was Lieutenant Aminadab Hitch, of the Susquehanna, while grinning at his principal's side, with the copper-coloured pigment but half washed from his cunning face, was the ci-devant Indian boy, Blaise, alias Japhet Bunch, a Yankee corporal of marines. We heard afterwards that the lieutenant, who was famous for his power of personating an assumed character, had visited Nassau for the express purpose of securing the prize money of so valuable a capture as the Saucy Jane to his own war vessel. It was his accomplice, the pretended Indian lad, who had stealthily ascended the rigging and loosened the sail to give notice to the look-out men of the sloop of the whereabouts of the blockade runner. After this, the two worthies had stolen the dingey, first disabling the other boats from pursuit, and had pulled out to sea, where, as they had expected, they had seen a preconcerted signal from their own ship, and had been picked up by her before we approached the channel through which the false curé was aware of the skipper's intention to pass. Had we even eluded the Susquehanna, we must have been infallibly sunk or taken by the Portland, which was awaiting us on the other tack.

I do not wish to dwell on the scenes of misery that ensued on board the schooner when husbands were torn from their wives, and fathers separated from their children, to be consigned to the dreary captivity of Forts Warren and Lafayette. Nor was it pleasant to see the despair of my charge, poor Mrs. Bolton, whose hopes of seeing her husband again in life were, to all appearance, dashed to the ground when on the eve of being realised; while, to poor Captain Harrison, the affair was simply ruin. The sight of his pale angry face haunts me still, as he was led away to be placed in irons, like the rest of the crew and officers. However, the caprice or mercy of the Federal authorities procured the release of Mrs. Bolton, as well as of several of the other ladies, after a short detention; and, though I was not myself permitted to accompany my charge within the Confederate lines, I was glad to hear that she and her children had arrived safely at Charleston, and still more glad to hear that Captain Bolton's recovery was considered probable. And thus ended what was my first, and will most assuredly be my last, experience of blockade running.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXVII. ON THE RIVER-BANK.

He who writes these lines was, many years since, dining in a cheap restaurant in the Palais Royal. He liked to dine in state; but, being poor, was forced to put up with the second-floor splendour of the great Palace of Gormandising. The glass is as glittering, and the gilding as gaudy in the attic as in the basement of this place, only, there is a diminution of price correspondent to the ascent you make, and, by an odd paradox, you lose caste as you mount. What matters it? If that which they call a poulet à la Marengo on the first floor be, as they assert, a nasty mess hashed up from the scourings and leavings of better cook-shops, and the poulet downstairs be a triumph of the art in which Carême and Ude excelled, it must come to the same thing in the long run. Abate a little for the difference in flavour—and what is flavour? Is there anything nastier than an olive, or caviar, or the trail of a woodcock, at first tasting? You will find both dishes equally rich in colour, multifarious in ingredients, rich and sloppy. And both will make you equally bilious the next morning.

He of whom I write, then, being pinched in purse, dined, not at Véfour's below, but at the humbler Richard's above. He had some youth and health remaining, then. He could look upon the wine when it was red, or even when it was the lividest ordinaire ever manufactured, without dreading its after effects. He paid his forty sous; had his three courses; fed, and was content.

Now here was a thing which struck him between his third service and his dessert, on the instant occasion consisting of a pear—a pear so swollen, supine and sleepy, that, being a Radical young man at that period, he likened it to an Elder Brother of the Trinity House. The thing struck him thus. Richard's is *very* brave indeed, in looking-glasses. There are mirrors on every side of you. Though ever so solitary at a table, you need never, if reflexion can help it, be alone. You have the company of yourself. Eyes right and eyes left, and then turn volte-face: so you are quadrupled. You become twins twice over: quins, if I may coin such a word.

The person discoursed of, however, was satisfied with using the knife, fork, and plate before him as a plane of perspective, and looked straight before him without changing his base. In front of him was a very large looking-glass in a very gay gold frame. Naturally, in this he saw himself. Naturally, also, he saw reflected in the looking-glass which was at the other end of the dining-hall, another self of his, taken dorsally. And, in equal obedience to the immutable laws of nature, the starting-points of reflexion and refraction being once established, there stretched before him an interminable vista of mirrors that were before and mirrors that were behind, of front selves and back selves, of table-knives, forks, and chandeliers over and over again, to infinity. So, lately, standing upon a high tower upon a rock, looking upon the Falls of Niagara, did this same person ask, unthinkingly, and like a fool as he was, of the negro who was his guide, whether the rush of waters were always in that wise: whereon the black man answered him, not according to his folly, but in simple wisdom: "I 'spect, mas'r, it's gwine on so for ebber and ebber." For ever and ever. The solemn words brought the scene of the looking-glass back to his mind. They too went on for ever and ever. Although the vanishing lines of the perspective diminished at last to a pin's point, and their continuity was undiscernible to the keenest gaze, there must have stretched on, more and more microscopically delineated, myriads upon myriads more looking-glasses, tables, knives, forks, and diners. The old schoolmen used to hold disputations on the numbers of legions of angels that could dance on the point of a needle. The thesis is not so absurd as it seems. Give us but a lens of sufficient magnifying power, and we might discover how upon some spicula of matter ten thousand times finer than a "Coventry hundred," not thousands, but millions of God's creatures, having heads, and lungs, and ducts, and bowels, and lives, do dance.

The looking-glasses, then, went on for ever and ever. There could not be an end to them, for they had two ends. There could not be a beginning, for there were two beginnings, or rather the beginning was the end, and the end was the beginning, for the foremost mirror did no more and no less in glancing back its fellow

than did the hindermost one. It was the old old story of the serpent with its tail in its mouth.

And while he who had paid forty sous for his dinner was gazing on this, and musing upon it, the deft waiter approached him from behind with the sleepy pear. He saw him in the glass. He was a very white-faced waiter, and his grin was ghastly. Late hours, much gas, and the steam of many dinners, had made him hopelessly pallid. Never too much flesh had he, I wot, and that which he had originally possessed had wasted away beneath the influence of the gas-burners and the stew-pans, so that he looked now, merely as though a wan leathery integument had been drawn for decency's sake over his skull. With his closely-cropped cranium, whiskerless jaws, gleaming teeth, sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, white cravat, with his monstrous bow, and ever present smirk, he was uncommonly like a genteel death's head. Something like a shudder came over the guest as he looked upon this fetch of Mortality, smirking in the midst of the vast image of Eternity streaming away from him. As there were more mirrors, so were there more Death's-head waiters; and they encompassed him on every side, and went on for ever and ever. Oh! mortal man, for ever and ever.

That Life should be so dovetailed into Death, faster and firmer than the cunningest joiner, with his glue and his mortice, ever dreamt of, is but natural, is but the way of the world, is but decreed beyond our comprehension and our conception. Better, perhaps, to take them as they come, and wait for the end in humble hope, than to continue peering into the looking-glasses till we go mad.

Much the more so, as the yellow forehead of the King of Terrors is often wreathed with flowers, as the worm that never dies has the prettiest painted skin imaginable, as Death is but the reverse side of an arras all woven in gay designs representing the innocent pastimes of Arcadia, and the lives of gods and goddesses. What did Mr. Wordsworth's simple child, down Rydal Mount way, know of death? The churchyard was her playground. Those who slept beneath were not dead, but her brothers and sisters, and they were seven. Death, after all, is of the chameleon kind. Scan him very narrowly and he changes hue. Get over the embarrassment of a first acquaintance, and he turns out to be somebody else. He is no longer Death, but Life Eternal.

Now, there was a certain little maiden who had lived all her life on the very brink of the grave; who had been cradled, as it were, in a coffin, and swaddled in cereclothes, and whose playthings were, after a manner, skulls and cross-bones, a mattock and a spade. Of course I am speaking metaphorically. The certain little maiden, pretty little Mademoiselle Amanda, had no bodily acquaintance with the ugly things I mention. Yet she knew all about them, heard them talked about every hour in the day, lived over them and bore their icy neighbourhood with great philosophy. Why should she trouble her innocent young head about such horrors? She had been for long years accustomed to them; besides, they were her good papa's business, not hers. She was very fond of her good papa. She was very fond of everybody. She was but seventeen years of age; and at that period of life I have known youngsters who were fond of spiders and monkeys, and the ugliest of dogs, and the crossest of cats.

Mademoiselle Amanda lived in the left wing of the Edifice, which was but one story high. The Edifice was called (I am afraid) The Morgue. Her good papa had his office in the opposite wing, and there he kept his huge vellum-bound and brass-clamped registers, which were quite as bulky, and well-nigh as numerous, as the books of a London banking-house. Papa was a public functionary. He held a responsible post in the service of the good city of Paris, and lodging, fire, and candles were allowed him gratis. Amanda's sitting and bed room were just over the large room on the ground floor, occupied by the lodgers in the Edifice. The lodgers never disturbed her, although they came in at all hours, some of them very unseasonable. They were the quietest lodgers in the world. They seldom stopped more than two or three days, and, strange to say, they paid nothing for their bed, or their board—if that could properly be called board which was in reality stone. Amanda's parlour was quite a grove of singing-birds. She had two canaries, she had a thrush, she had a linnet. She had a blackbird who sang the "Marseillaise" and the "Parisienne"—airs not then entirely prohibited in France—but who discreetly avoided the imputation of being an out and out Republican of the red kind by now and then tuning up "La Belle Gabrielle" and "Vive Henri Quatre," but who was not, by any means, a Bonapartist bird, seeing that he could never be persuaded to give so much as a bar of "Partant pour la Syrie."

Amanda's walls were hung with pretty lithographs and water-colour drawings. On her balcony, overlooking the old houses on the quays, with their high roofs and blinking little windows, with the narrow bright blue Seine shining between, and the towers of Notre-Dame overlooking all, she had a miniature conservatory. Yes, she had roses and geraniums and forget-me-nots, and the modest sweet-smelling mignonnette. She adored flowers: so seemingly did Blaise, her cat, though ofttimes chastised for lying perdu among the foliage, whence at his ease he could blink with covetous eyes upon the birds in their cages. She was fond of music too, this accomplished little Amanda, and had not only a pretty cottage piano made by Pleyel, but absolutely a harp—a harp from the great Erard's factory. Her good papa denied her nothing. Sheets of music lay about—dulcet little barcaroles, and romances, and chansonettes, the which she warbled, accompanying herself meanwhile with such sweetness and such grace, as frequently to elicit from her guests twitters of approving criticism. Then

she drew—drew very prettily, too. Big classical heads with round chins, vacant eyes, broad foreheads, and tresses like coils of rope. These she finished in Italian chalk on tinted paper, to the delight of her professor, who was a mighty man from the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Did she paint? Yes, flowers, and a little landscape. Anything else? Well, she embroidered charmingly; was not too fond of novel reading for a girl of her age, choosing even then the demurest of fictions, and utterly eschewing the fascinating but perilous MM. Dumas and Paul de Kock. She was very good and pious. She went regularly to mass, and had ses pauvres—her poor, whom she tended and succoured quite as though she had been a staid middle-aged person. As yet, her heart had said nothing to her. She had been to a ball but thrice in her life. Men, with the exception of Monsieur Philibert, she regarded as sweet and noble creatures, but still as devouring monsters to be feared and fled from. Ces terribles Messieurs, she called them. Monsieur Philibert she did not fear. He was old and fat, and she had known him long, and he was papa's good friend.

Little Amanda's mamma was dead. Nobody but herself, her father, and a bonne, lived on the first (and consequently top) floor of the Edifice. Down stairs there were people who took care of the lodgers, but she never saw them. There was a side-door for her to go out at, and once a week or so, when business was slack—for the lodgers were very capricious as to the time of their coming, though exceedingly regular as to that of their going—Amanda's papa would take her to dine en ville, and then to some little boulevard theatre, whence she would come back skipping and clapping her hands, and humming over the airs of the vaudeville couplets she had heard. The little girl was as good as gold, and as happy as the day was long.

On the very same morning that Jean Baptiste Constant was entertaining his friends at the Café Restaurant Chesterfield, Amanda, too, had company in the first floor of the Edifice. Lily was there. Now, I am afraid that Madame de Kergolay would have been very angry indeed had she known that her protégée was paying such a visit, or was in such a place. It was, perhaps, the queerest place in the world for a young lady who was being educated in genteel notions to find herself in. But it was all Madame Thomas's fault. That good woman could see that Lily was unhappy, that she was mourning in secret. She half divined the cause of her sorrow. She strove to assuage it by every means in her power, to divert the young girl's mind, and to lead her to more cheerful thoughts. "Ces jeunesses—these young ones are always the same. They get an idea into their heads, and it takes a hydraulic machine to get it out again. Let us try to amuse her. Let us strive to make her gay. She must be dull sometimes in that old place of ours. Yes, she must be in love. Malediction upon love, and yet one can hardly help blessing it at the same time. What an old fool I am! If Ma'amselle Lily is in love, I cannot expect her to make a confidante of an old, worn-out, battered thing like me. Let us place her in contact with something young, and fresh, and innocent, to whom she can tell half her secret, and who will guess the rest. Did I say young, and fresh, and innocent? Ah, ma foi, they are all ready to guess ce calembourg-là. They can all find out what love is. Allons, I will take her to see Amanda. There can be no harm in that."

Amanda was one of Madame Thomas's great cronies. She had known and loved her, ever since she was a little child. She had an awful reverence for Amanda's papa, whom she called Monsieur le Gardien; she had known his wife, that amiable blonde woman, with a perpetual cold in her head, which had ultimately got into her stomach, and so, reaching her feet, killed her. She entertained the profoundest respect for Monsieur Philibert, who, whenever he met her, rarely failed to regale her with the latest on dits and the choicest snuff. The first floor over the Edifice was, indeed, Madame Thomas's great gossiping shop. Whenever she had half an hour to spare, she would slip away and revel in chat. Nor did her patronage of the Edifice stop there. Madame Thomas wasn't exactly a ghoule. She wasn't a vampire. She had no cruelty in her composition. She was a very kind-hearted old woman, well enough disposed to be jovial on occasion; but she had, in common with a great number of other old women, a secret and irresistible penchant for that which some persons are accustomed to call the horrible. She couldn't help it. About people's tastes it is useless to dispute. Everybody has his taste, his whim, his fancy, his hobby. Madame Thomas had hers. She did not carry it to excess, but she was forced to gratify it sometimes. She liked to trot down stairs, at the termination of her gossip on the first floor of the Edifice, and see how the lodgers were getting on. It did her good. She liked it, although she was not very far removed from that period of life when she might reasonably expect to become a lodger herself, a permanent one, although not in *that* edifice. Sometimes the lodgers were green, and Madame Thomas would take a great deal of snuff; sometimes they were blue, at which she would take more, and cry "Pouah!" And not unfrequently they would be both green and blue.

Amanda did her best to entertain her guests. She bustled about, putting her birds through the most winning of their ways, and by clever tapping at the bars of their cages, and tempting them with bits of sugar between her pretty lips, eliciting from them the sweetest of their carols. Of her flowers, too, she made great show, blowing aside their petals, and turning up their delicate leaves to show her visitors. Then she sat down to the piano, and played some of her liveliest pieces; and then—no severer critics being near than a young girl as innocent as herself, and an old woman who knew no more of music than she did of Greek—

she sang some arch little French songs—songs that had refrains like the fluttering of birds' wings, or the pattering of mice into their holes—songs which didn't mean much, and were mainly, if you please, nonsense; but which, at least, didn't mean mischief—at once a rarity and an advantage, I apprehend, in the vocal music of France the Fair.

By this it was breakfast-time. The bonne set the table, and laid out the simple summer cates on which the girl usually breakfasted—eggs on the plate, cream cheese, fruit, plenty of bread-and-butter, coffee, and a little thin red wine. "If good papa and Monsieur Philibert should come in," quoth Amandine, "their beefsteak and their omelette will be ready for them in five minutes." There was a stronger wine, too, for the use of good papa and his friends. Strange to say, the wine was always kept in a cupboard on a level with the dwelling-rooms of the Edifice. They had a cellar down stairs: why didn't they store their Bordeaux and their cognac there? Well, Amanda didn't like the notion. Perhaps she thought the cellar, so near the Seine, was damp; perhaps she feared that those lodgers, usually so well behaved, might get up some night and inebriate themselves on her papa's potables. And the bare notion of one of those lodgers roaming about the cellar! Ugh!

By-and-by arrived good papa, and with him his ancient and constant friend, Monsieur Philibert. This last was the plumpest, rosiest, brightest-eyed, whitest-toothed, most contented-looking man you could wish to see on a summer's day, or out of the ranks of the twenty-seventh battalion of the Legion of the Seine, or out of the members of his own peculiar profession, which is saying a good deal. Philibert was a National Guardsman, and, as such, naturally wore spectacles, and was slightly inclined to corpulence. He was not quite a carpet warrior, however. That big bearskin, those epaulettes of scarlet worsted, those snowy cross-belts, had shone with distinction at several barricades, and had loomed large in the fore-front of the battle, when the Boulevard du Temple, after Fieschi's horrid attempt on the king's life, was swept by troops. Philibert was not quite so angry with the half-crazy regicide as it would perhaps have beseemed a loyal man, bourgeois de Paris, and strong adherent of the order of things and the dynasty of July, to have shown himself. He spoke of the murderous Italian, pending his trial and condemnation, as "le Monsieur." Once he was heard to allude to him as "le pauvre diable." You see that Fieschi, with his infernal machine, although he missed the principal object of his hatred, and blew off, instead, his own fingers, and ultimately his own head, yet managed to kill Marshal Mortier, who, in full uniform, was riding by the side of Louis Philippe. And did not the murdered marshal have one of the grandest of funerals ever seen in Paris—triumphal car, winged Victories, gilt wreaths, pall of silver tissue, whole Birnam woods of ostrich plumes, horses draped in black velvet—every luxury, in fine? And was not Philibert there? Not Philibert in the bearskin and red epaulettes of the civic soldier, but Philibert in full new glossy black, in plaited and ruffled linen, in shorts and silk stockings—Philibert with the cocked-hat known as chapeau bras beneath his left arm, and a shining ebony truncheon tipped with silver in his right hand—Philibert with a dress-sword by his side, a silver chain round his neck, and silver buckles in his shoes? For he also was a marshal of France, after a fashion, and had a right to bear a bâton.

He was, indeed, a master of the ceremonies attached to the Corporation of Undertakers—to the Pompes Funèbres—and in that capacity had conducted some of the most splendid funeral processions of modern times. The unthinking and the malicious called him a croque-mort, a vampire, a ghoul, but Philibert smiled philosophically at their sneers. The plump and rosy man was not only contented, but proud of his profession. "I shall yet live," he would say, "to conduct the imposing ceremonies incidental to the interment of the great Napoleon, whose sacred remains are still detained by his barbarous and perfidious enemies on the Atlantic rock, where they slew him. What a funeral that will be! With the aid of the military force, the paraphernalia of the garde-meuble, and the choristers of the Opera, the Pompes Funèbres shall, please Heaven, far surpass all they have hitherto done. Funerals of Foy, Manuel, Louis the Eighteenth, S. A. R. the Duke of Berry—bah! those little parades of the Theatre shall all be thrown into the shade. When we file down the Champs Elysées on our way to the Invalids, something shall be seen." Monsieur Philibert was an artist. Thus, though he half forgave Fieschi for shooting a marshal of France who could be sumptuously interred, he professed the utmost horror and indignation at the fate of the humble workmen and workwomen, victims to the indiscriminate massacre caused by the infernal machine. "Is not the fosse commune—the common ditch at Montmartre—gorged enough," he would say, "but that we must strive to choke it still more with misérables, coffined in white deal with tin-tacks, and shovelled into the earth at an expense to the good city of Paris of eight livres seven sols? And these émeutes, these riots, which, in my capacity as a member of the civic guard, I have the honour to assist in quelling. Dites-moi donc un peu, of what good is it shooting and bayoneting all these deluded artisans and half-starved va nu-pieds? It is nobody's business to bury them decently, and after cumbering your register for a time, good papa, what is there for them but a pit filled with quick lime. It is inconceivable. Poor people ought not to die. They should go away somehow, or, at least, they should save the administration the trouble of burying them at a tariff which I have no hesitation in affirming to be indecently and absurdly low. Why is there not a Ganges into which the corpses of ces hommes de rien du tout could be thrown, or a funeral pyre whereon their bodies could be incinerated? For

such a ceremony, performed en masse, the Pompes Funèbres could, perhaps, display a taste and a luxury from the use of which, in individual cases, it is debarred." This was Monsieur Philibert's grand manner. There was no harm in him, however. He was one of the mildest and most placable of men. He was a widower, and his wife had once kept a baby-linen warehouse: what time, ere he himself had gone into the undertaking business, Philibert had not disdained to hold a senior clerkship in a Bureau de Nourrices: an agency office for wet-nurses.

SILK-SPINNING SPIDERS.

The arachnida are not all spiders, or spinners, and are not, indeed, the only or the principal producers of silk. There are spiders, or arachnida, which cannot spin a thread, and there are shell-fish, or mollusca, which spin cables. When, after much reading, the simple-minded reader gets into the meaning of the authors of systems and classifications, he finds that they often do not mean what they say; for by spiders they do not mean all animals which spin, and by arachnida they really intend nothing more definite than the six-footed and the eight-footed groups of animals.

Silk is formed of fibrine, the substance of the fibres, with a coating of albumen, a layer of gelatine, and some fat and colouring matter. The chief spiders of silk are caterpillars. Maggots, or larves, are the spinners which clothe the fair sex of the hominal species in silken attire. The attempts to make something useful of the silk of the animals more especially called spiders, have all ended hitherto in nothing better than the production of curiosities. Gloves and purses made of spider silk may sometimes be seen in museums. But gloves and purses are sold and bought in the cities of the Mediterranean, which have been woven of the silk spun by shell-fish of the pinna kind. For that matter, I have seen a purse which was knitted of the fibres of the mineral called asbestos. The newspapers of Vienna, some years back, mentioned that several pairs of excellent silk stockings had been knitted of spider silk; but the news, as the French say, awaits confirmation. Spider silk has, however, it appears to be established by sufficient testimony, been successfully used as thread. A spider is found on the island of St. Helena which is handsomely marked, banded, and coloured, the fibres of the egg-bag of which might be used as silk; and the ladies of the Bermudas actually use the silk of spiders for sewing purposes. The silk of a spider common in the Bermudas, Epeira clavipes, is so strong that it can be wound from the insect itself like cotton from a reel. The webs of this spider stretch ten feet across between the cedar-trees, catching large insects and small birds: a certain proof that their threads rival cotton threads in strength. In reference to the practical, industrial, and commercial question of the utility of spider silk, it is an important fact that their webs are strong enough to hold small birds. When Madame Merian first published this fact, it was stoutly denied by the stay-at-home naturalists, the regular critics of travellers' tales. Here is a specimen of the sort of experiment upon the results of which the testimony of observers is often gainsayed, and even their veracity and good faith called in question. Madame Merian having said there were spiders which snared and devoured birds, a naturalist wounded a humming-bird and offered it to a mygale. But the mygale, instead of attacking the bird, retreated from it with fear or aversion. Confident in the result of his experiment, the naturalist scouted the story of the bird-eating spider! Yet it has been repeatedly confirmed since, and never was improbable. M. Moreau de Jonnès says that the South American mygale climbs trees, to devour the young humming-birds; and Mr. H. W. Bates saw in Brazil two little finches entangled in the web of a grey-brown mygale. The finches he judged to be male and female; one was dead, and the other was under the body of the hideous spider. Threads strong enough to hold birds may well be used for sewing purposes by ladies resident in hot countries abounding in such spiders. Even men of business have tried to turn spider silk to practical account. "M. Bon, a Frenchman, and M. Fremeyer, a Spaniard," says Mr. Blackwell, "have succeeded in fabricating stockings, gloves, purses, and other articles, of the silk produced by spiders; but the great voracity of these animals, and the difficulty experienced in providing them with food, have hitherto prevented this material from being made available for manufacturing purposes on an extensive scale." May it not be that the authors of these experimental enterprises have attempted too much? If it could be established that spider silk makes good silk thread, much would be gained for the use of mankind, although the material might never be made available for purses, gloves, or stockings. Curious calculations have been made in reference to the production, the relative production, of spider and caterpillar silk. A spider, it is said, lays six eggs for one egg laid by a moth, yet the moth makes twelve times as much silk as the spider. Two thousand three hundred and four caterpillars make as much silk as twenty-seven thousand six hundred and forty-eight spiders of the house-spider species. The proportional strength of the thread of the silk-moth and of the thread of a house-spider is said to be five to one in favour of the silk-moth. Spiders, moreover, are shockingly addicted to eating each other: a taste of which the silkworm is innocent. Many six-footed animals make silk, and only one species of them all has yet been discovered suitable for the purposes of the silk weaver — the silkworm of the mulberry-tree. The experiments with all the numerous other species have disappointed the sanguine hopes entertained. When we remember how little spiders have been hunted, collected, studied,

and bred, in comparison with butterflies—entomology being a popular, and arachnology an unpopular, science—may we not hope that a species of spider will yet be found yielding silk suitable for the manufacture of stockings, or gloves, or thread? This discovery awaits the successful student of all the spinning animals.

There are not merely mollusks which fasten themselves to rocks and seaweeds by means of cables of silken threads; there is a shell-fish which lets itself down from floating weeds in the ocean as the spider hangs by a thread from the bushes in the garden. This shell-fish is the Litiopa bombix of Keiner and of Sandors Rang. The vast masses, large as islands, of seaweed which float upon the steaming surface of the tropical seas, have many strange inhabitants, and, among them, this little-known spinning periwinkle. Even the cable or byssus of the mussels, and the soft supple numerous and warm threads of the pinna, are fabrics the manufacture of which is but imperfectly known. The spinning apparatus of the mussel is situated at the base of what is called the foot; the spinning apparatus of most of the insects issues from the lower jaw; yet the silk ducts of the six-footed insects, called Myrmeleon, like those of all the eight-footed group, are located at the extremity of the abdomen. The word cocoon is properly enough applied to bags spun by spiders, for they are really egg-bags; but it is not correctly used when applied to the cases spun by insects, and into which they enclose themselves as in hammocks, or sleeping coffins, when passing from the state of larves to the condition of chrysalides. Certain insects spin tents, in which they live in common; but it has only quite recently been proved that any spiders can co-operate to spin either a web or an abode. But both insects and spiders spin to shut up the cavities into which they retire, and to tie together the materials of which they build dwellings. A British spider has been seen often, and lost sight of now for a long time, which makes a raft on which it floats upon the surface of pools and ditches by tying dry weeds together. The Reverend Revett Shephard often noticed a very large spider which was wafted about on the watery surface of the ditches of Norfolk, upon a raft of weeds held together by silken cords. On spying an insect drowning in the water this spider quitted his raft for an instant to seize the prey, returning to it quickly to devour his victim at his leisure. But not merely does the raft serve the spider as a boat to float him into the vicinity of his game; it serves him as a screen to hide him from his enemies. Whenever he sees any danger approaching, he retires under his raft for safety until it is past.

Certain kinds of spiders have been known to eat their own silk, and M. Boitard says that the silk of their egg-bags is one of the earlier meals of the young garden-spiders. He saw the young of un epeire porte-croix (Epeira diadema) issue from their cocoon, and, after devouring the shells of their eggs, and the silk of a yellow colour and thick loose texture of the bag, separate and disperse. These youngsters, it would appear, commence the business of silk weavers on a capital of their mother's web of silk. Many spiders, it is well known, if their webs be often broken, will swallow them to the last thread. An ordinary circular net of the garden-spider, says Mr. Blackwell, of fourteen or sixteen inches diameter, contains one hundred and twenty thousand tiny globules of liquid gum upon the concentric lines, and yet, when not interrupted, the spider weaves her net and fixes her thousands upon thousands of globules at exactly regular distances, in less than one hour. When seen under the microscope, and represented by photography, the regularity with which these adhesive globules are disposed, is scarcely less admirable than the mathematical exactitude of the forms of the cells of the honeycomb of the bee.

Spiders change their skins very often. According to the observations of Mr. Blackwell, one of the common house-spiders (Tegenaria civilis) changes nine times before arriving at maturity. These changes of their integuments are common to both sexes. They change once in the cocoon, and eight times after quitting it. This species is built to live four years.

As everybody has heard, spiders can live a long time without food. This power they owe to the fatty or adipose matter which fills the interstices between the organs in the abdomen. Held together with fine cellular tissue, this adipose matter serves as a reserve of nutriment for spiders against long fastings, like the tubers of certain plants. A female of the species called Thiridion quadripunctatum has been known to exist eighteen months in a closely corked phial.

Nothing is known respecting the hearing and smell of spiders. Taste they have, for they choose their food; and this sense is said to exist at the entrance of the pharynx, or opening to the gullet. They have considerable delicacy of touch: the sense belonging to their legs, or their palpi, or perhaps to both. Their eyes are simple and not compound, and they are short-sighted. Certain species can change the colour of their eyes, to express their emotions. Mr. Blackwell mentions that Thomisus pallidus, and one or two of its congeners, can, by a very perceptible internal motion, change the colour of the front intermediate pair of eyes from dark red brown to pale golden yellow.

Few persons are ignorant of the peculiarities of that structure of their feet which enable certain flies and spiders to climb smooth perpendicular surfaces, and walk on ceilings with their backs downward. The papillæ or tiny teats on their feet are arranged in the form of brushes or scapulæ. This structure is well exhibited by two common British species—Drassus sericeous and Salticus senicus. The brushes emit a viscous or adhesive secretion. Some species have also toothed claws, with hooks for grasping their lines, peculiarities which are well exhibited by the larger epeiræ under the microscope. The ciniflonidæ have combs or double

spines upon their hind legs for heckling or combing, twisting or curling, certain of their lines into the curls or flocculi characteristic of their snares.

The students of spiders have long differed in reference to their faculty of shooting forth their lines in a straight direction, and without the aid of any current of wind. Mr. Blackwell affirms that a current of air is indispensably necessary for this purpose. "Many intelligent naturalists," he says, "entertain the opinion that spiders can forcibly propel or dart out lines from the spinners; but when placed on twigs set upright in glass vessels with perpendicular sides, containing a quantity of water sufficient to immerse their bases completely, all the efforts they make to effect an escape uniformly prove unavailing in a still atmosphere. However, should the individuals thus insulated be exposed to a current of air, either naturally or artificially produced, they immediately turn the abdomen in the direction of the breeze, and emit from the spinners a little of their viscid secretion, which, being carried out in a line by the current, becomes connected with some object in the vicinity, and affords them the means of regaining their liberty. If due precaution be used in conducting this experiment, it plainly demonstrates that spiders are utterly incapable of darting lines from their spinners, as they cannot possibly escape from their confinement on the twigs in situations where the air is undisturbed, but in the agitated atmosphere of an inhabited room, they accomplish their object without difficulty. Similar means are frequently employed by spiders in their natural haunts for the purposes of changing their situation and fixing the foundation of their snares."

But fallacies lurk in generalities, and with all due deference to Mr. Blackwell, it must be said that he lays down the law too largely when he decides that "spiders," meaning all spiders, "are utterly incapable of darting lines from their spinners."

The different kinds of spiders have different kinds of spinnerets, adapted for different kinds of feats. The skin of the body of spiders consists of three layers; one, horny and hairy, and more or less transparent; another, soft and pigmentary; and a third, a network of muscular fibres adapted for compressing the abdomen. The spinnerets, which are generally six in number, are arranged in pairs. The hind pair is often prolonged, and three-jointed. There is in the ciniflonidæ a fourth pair planted in front, which are short, compressed, and unjointed. The spinnerets are moved by diverging bands of muscles connected with the surrounding skin. Inside the abdomen, nearer the base than the apex, there is a point opposite the orifice of the oviduct in the female, from which bands of muscles radiate. They keep the abdominal organs in their places, some of them being inserted into the skin both on the dorsal and ventral surfaces, and others running straight backward (in bundles of strongly striated fibres, like those moving the legs) into the spinnerets. The silk is secreted in sacs or bags, and twisting or branching tubes of various shapes and sizes, each furnished with a distinct *excretory* duct, ending on the surface of the spinneret.

There are four varieties of spinning glands. There are, first of all, the glands found only in the ciniflonidæ. These glands consist of many tiny cells, each having a nucleus and a duct, which are situated just beneath the supplementary spinnerets, supplying them with the fine silk forming the flakelets or flocculi of the ciniflo (Clubiona abrox and ferox). All the spiders of this group at present known are natives of Europe, Madeira, Upper Canada, and South America. They select for their retreats crevices in rocks, walls, and trees; the insides of buildings, and the foliage of shrubs. Their snares are highly complicated, and distinguished by filaments which have been curiously curled by their combs.

The second variety of glands supply chiefly the front and hind pairs of spinnerets. These glands consist of an immense collection of oval or fusiform cells with fine elastic ducts secreting, probably, the finer threads of the webs and egg-bags.

The third variety of glands are often of a very large size, especially in the garden-spiders. They contain cartilaginous sacs or convoluted tubes, firm, hard, brittle, and transparent, with ducts which are not elastic. They are supposed to secrete the adhesive lines which are placed upon the geometric webs.

The fourth variety of silk glands most probably produce the gossamer of the flying or aëronautic spiders, being numerous in Lycosa saccata and Thomisus cristatus. They consist of membranous sacs and tubes, some vermiform, others club-shaped, and others furnished with branched cæca or blind tubes. They have fibrous walls and elastic ducts, with a fibrous external coat, breaking into distinct rings when the duct is stretched. The sacs and ducts have a strong contractile and expulsive power. These glands probably secrete the stronger and larger lines which form the frames of the webs.

Mr. Meade, the author of these careful and minute observations upon the spinning glands, found that the glands and ducts of the last-mentioned kind of spiders were surrounded by a highly fibrous contractile coating, resembling the coating of the arteries in man and the higher animals. This contractile coating must enable the spiders to eject the silky fluid with considerable violence. I am able to confirm this physiological inference by the results of decisive experiments. Many years ago, having carefully excluded the air from my bedroom, I placed spiders upon the up-turned bottom of a teacup, and then put the cup, mouth downward, into the midst of a saucer full of water. Most of the spiders I tried this experiment upon went down the outside of the cup all round, and, when they felt the water, went up again, remaining there helpless, discouraged, and bewildered; but the particular spider in question,

no doubt one of the Lycosidæ, after ascertaining, like the rest, that he was surrounded with water on all sides, went up to the bottom of the cup, and slowly pushed out a straight stiff thread some five or six inches long, in a horizontal position. He pushed the thread slowly out, as if to give it time to stiffen. Still holding the thread straightly and horizontally out, he turned his abdomen to all the points of the compass, as if searching for something to lay hold of, or feeling for a breeze.

Spiders can do more than they have yet received credit for. An observer, of whose accuracy no one who knows him will entertain a doubt, told me that he once saw a garden-spider busy stretching his line from one shrub or bush to another. The wind being rather strong, the line oscillated more than the spider approved, and he accordingly steadied it to the ground by threads which he attached between it and small pebbles lying beneath it on the earth. This looks very like the sagacity and shiftiness which, in man, is called intelligence.

The tent of Clotho Durandii deserves special mention among the specimens exemplifying the ingenuity of spiders. This tent is formed at first of two sheets of the finest taffeta, to which the spider adds additional coverings when hatching her eggs. The outside sheet is soiled to conceal the tent; the inside is white, clean, downy, and warm. When compelled to leave her tent in search of food, this spider secures the outside sheets with fastenings of which she alone possesses the secret.

Spiders, mites, and scorpions, have little or nothing in common except eight feet. There are immense differences between the parasitic mites and the flying or diving spider; and between the demodex, found in the white matter squeezed from the human nose, or detected in the wax of the human ear, and the spider of the clay-tunnels, or the scorpions of hot climes, with their sting-bearing abdomens. Recent discoveries only bring into greater relief, the incongruities of the established classification. No mite was known to inhabit the sea until Professor Allman discovered one living as a parasite in the nostrils of a seal. He called it the Halarachne. It has no eyes, and has five thread-shaped feelers. It reminds one of demodex, by the length of the body and the proximity of the feet to the head. Mr. Gosse has since discovered two very minute species of mites, crawling about seaweed at extreme low water. The Halacari of Gosse have four legs in front and four behind. These marine animals are grouped with the spider because they have eight feet, although they do not spin.

Scorpions have stings instead of spinnerets in their abdomens. In their chief characteristics they differ vastly from mites and spiders. Scorpions suck the juices of their prey, pumping them into the alimentary canal, by contracting and relaxing the transverse muscles of the phryngeal sac. If spiders preying upon insects may be called entomologists, scorpions may be called both arachnologists and entomologists, for they hunt and kill both insects and spiders. From the description of eye-witnesses, it appears that large flies of the musca, or house-fly genus, are seized with an irresistible fury at the sight of the scorpion, which compels them to fly at it again and again. The scorpion remains on the wall, with its lobster-like claw outstretched to receive the fly, which, if so disposed, could easily escape. But, mad with fury, the fly darts against the crust of the scorpion, and rebounds from it with astonishment. After wheeling round as if in flight some two or three yards off, it stops and looks, and is again impelled to charge with fury. This unequal and fatal combat continues until the stunned, confused, and furious, fly is caught in the claws of the scorpion and eaten.

TO PARENTS.

Going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it (like the Devil in Job), it has sometimes occurred to me, that amidst the universal preaching of the duties of children to parents, a few words might well be said on the duties of parents to children. Can these few words do any harm? I trow not. The truth never does any harm. No child, blessed with even ordinarily good parents, will love and honour them any the less for whatever may be said against bad parents. And to try and sustain the authority of the latter by false pretences is as futile as setting up a fetish-idolatry instead of the true religion of the heart—that instinctive filial faith which is the foundation-stone of all law and order in the world. Nay, in the universe, for what would become of us in this weary existence, if we could not from its beginning to its ending, look up and say "Our Father"?

It is a solemn and terrible truth, that there are parents who no more deserve the name than the sovereign of Dahomey deserves to be held as a "king, by the grace of God." Yet in one sense the "divine right" of both kings and parents is unalienable. "Honour thy father and thy mother" is an absolute law, given without reference to the worthiness of the individual parent; it being a duty which the child owes to himself, to honour his parents simply *as parents*, without considering whether or not they have fulfilled their duty. There is a limit beyond which human nature cannot be expected to go: when actual moral turpitude renders "honour" a perfect farce; when respect becomes a mockery, and obedience an impossibility. But even then one resource remains—and remains for ever—endurance and silence. The unworthy parent must be treated like the unworthy king, tacitly handed down from the position which he has proved himself unfit to occupy, neither injured nor insulted, simply deposed.

But these are exceptional cases, so exceptional that each must be decided on its separate merits; and in most instances the outside public, which takes such delight in

criticising, condemning, or excusing it, is quite unfit to judge it at all. But there are innumerable other instances, not the "cruel fathers" or "heartless mothers" of fiction, but every-day, well-meaning, respectable people, who are nevertheless domestic Molochs, before whom every successive child must pass through the fire; ancient Remphans, requiring living human daily sacrifices—precious indeed, for all sacrifice is lovely in the offerer—but none the less an unnecessary and cruel immolation, which lookers-on must regard with both pity and righteous wrath.

In how many ways, ignorantly or carelessly, do parents thus act as actual scourges to the children who were given them, not for their personal amusement, benefit, or pride, but for the sake of the children themselves! How entirely they seem to forget that each human soul which is sent to them through the mysteries of marriage and birth, is not their own to do as they like with, but a solemn charge, for which they will be accountable to God and man! If any weaknesses of theirs, love of power, love of ease, even love of love—often the deepest selfishness of all—lead them to ignore this charge, woe be to them and their children. "Unto the third and fourth generation" is a law, not of divine anger, but of divine inevitable necessity. One wicked father, or vicious, vile-tempered mother, often remains a family curse for a century.

It is at once the most awful responsibility, and the utmost consecration of parenthood, that of all human ties, this one requires most self-abnegation. And when we think how very few really unselfish people there are in the world—not many among women, of men almost none—we only wonder how so many decent folk do contrive somehow to bring up decent families,—or let them bring themselves up, as strange to say, many excellent families often do. But the very fact that children left almost entirely to themselves sometimes turn out better than those who have been subjected to the sharpest parental oversight—only drives us back by implication to the truth at which we started—how few people are in the least fitted to be parents.

And perhaps no wonder. Young people falling desperately in love, marrying in haste and repenting at leisure; other people, not young, and certainly guiltless of any youthful follies, who commit the deliberate mature sin of making marriage a mere matter of convenience; husbands wearing out their bodies and souls in the making of money, and wives frittering away their helpless, aimless lives in the extravagant spending of it—what can such as these know or feel of the duties of parenthood?

At first it is a very pretty amusement, doubtless. How delighted papa is to make after-dinner pets of his fairy girls, and encourage the obstreperousness of his fine manly boys. And mamma, with a certain natural instinct that rarely fails even in the silliest of women, is a tolerably good mother so long as her children remain in the nursery. But when they grow into youths and maidens, requiring larger wisdom, a tenderer guidance; when individual character asserts itself, as it will and must, in any creature worth becoming a man or a woman—then is the crisis—most difficult and dangerous—at which, alas, so many household histories break down.

The transition state of adolescence is a trying time. The young folks, like all half-grown animals, are awkward, unwise, self-conceited, revolutionary; while the elders find it hard to believe that "the children" are, in reality, children no more; that characters have developed and tastes matured, very likely most opposite to their own, yet not necessarily inferior characters or erring tastes. Some minds, at once strong and narrow, find it nearly impossible to comprehend this. They do not perceive when the time comes, as come it must in every family, when it is the children's right to begin to think and act for themselves, and the parents' duty to allow them to do it; when it is wisest gradually to slacken authority, to sink "I command" into "I wish," to grant large freedom of opinion, and above all in the expression of it. Likewise, and this is a most important element in family union, to give license, nay, actual sympathy, to wandering affections, friendships, or loves, which, for the time being, seem to find the home circle too narrow and too dull.

No doubt, to the parents this is rather trying. It is hard for mamma to discover that her girl not only enjoys, but craves after, a month's visit in some lively household; that she likes the company of other girls, and forms enthusiastic friendships, which mamma (a lady of between fifty and sixty) forgets that she herself ever had, and consequently thinks exceedingly silly, or idle, or wrong. Papa, too, cannot see why his boys—good, affectionate lads—should find it such dull work to stay at home of an evening, or should prefer a sensation play—"so different from what the stage was in *my* time"—to the longest game of chess with himself, or the most learned conversation with his staid and sober friends. Yet all this is quite natural; the boys and girls are foolish, perhaps, but not in the least guilty. Well for the household in which this, the earliest of many impending changes, should be recognised at once, still better that the recognition should come first from the elder and wiser side of it.

But, alas, here intrudes a truth which should be touched reverently and delicately, and yet it cannot be passed over, for it is a truth—that all parents are *not* wiser than their children. Sometimes a boy, quick-witted, honest, and good, finds, as he grows up, that his father is not a man to be relied on, but one of those weak souls who, without positive harm in them, are ever sinking lower and lower, and dragging their family down with them—whose authority is a mere name, whose advice is fatal to follow. Many a clever lad has come to see, even before he is out of his teens, that his only chance of getting on in the world is to rely solely on himself, and give as wide a berth as possible to his natural guardian and guide—his father. Likewise, many a girl, generous, warm-hearted, and sensitive, on passing into discriminating

womanhood, feels, and cannot help feeling, that if her mother had not been her mother, she would never have chosen her even as an ordinary acquaintance. These are bitter discoveries, ending in sharp daily agonies, irremediable, incommunicable. Happily the instinctive natural bond, added to the familiar habit of a lifetime, is so strong, that sometimes the sufferers themselves do not seem to feel their position quite so keenly as lookers-on do, who own no softening influence of custom or affection.

These sufferings are none the less real because they sometimes take the comical aspect. Witty writers have exhausted their wit on the sad spectacle, common enough in this commercial country, of parvenus, coarse and vulgar, who are perfect terrors to their educated children. But this is a small misfortune. A man seldom raises himself very high without having something to give to society equivalent to what he has won from it. Hundreds now-a-days carry with them into handsome houses, noble halls, and even palace doors, the traces of their humble origin—not pleasant, indeed, and sometimes comical,—but quite bearable, from the inherent worth or talent of the individual, and never warranting the slightest complaint or disrespect from a dutiful child. Far worse to bear is that ingrained coarseness of nature, not breeding, common to all ranks, which makes many a daughter blush scarlet at things her mother says and does, which yet she can neither prevent nor notice. And what can be sorer for a young man, high-minded and chivalrous, than to live in perpetual dread lest his father, the head of the house, should disgrace it by some small meanness, some "indirect crook't ways," which force any honest observer, even his own son, to perceive, that though he may be a Crœsus of money, or a nobleman in rank, he is certainly not a gentleman?

Between these opposite poles of tragedy and comedy lies an intermediate range of miseries, small indeed, but sorely hard to bear. One is when, as is patent to everybody except the parents themselves, the elder generation is, in mental and moral calibre, decidedly inferior to the younger. Not bad people, but only narrow: narrow in thought, and word, and deed; unable to recognise that what lies beyond their own limited vision has any existence whatsoever. These sort of people are very trying in all relations, the more so because, so far as they go, they are often exceedingly estimable. Only if nature has made one of their children in any way different from themselves, of larger mould and wider capacities, the extent to which that child is martyrised, even with the very best intentions, is sometimes incredible.

Yet outside, everybody says what excellent parents they are, and what a happy home their children must have! a fact of which they themselves are most thoroughly convinced. How can the young people weary of it for a moment? How can Mary, a charming, well educated, and perhaps very clever young woman, desire any other companion than her mother? Of course a mother is the best and closest companion for every girl. Most true, but not "of course," nor in virtue of the mere accident of motherhood. Sympathy comes by instinct, and confidence must be, not exacted, but won. Mary may have the strongest filial regard for that dear and good woman, to whom she owes and is ready to pay every duty that a daughter ought, and yet be inwardly conscious that nature has made the two so different in tastes, feelings, disposition, that if she were to open her heart to her, her mother would not understand her in the least. Not to speak of the difference of age, greater or less, and the not unnatural way in which elderly people who do not retain youthfulness of heart, as happily many do to the last day of life, grow out of sympathy with the young. But Providence having constituted these two mother and daughter, they must get on together somehow. And so they do. Though Mary in her secret soul may writhe sometimes, she loves mamma very dearly, and would love her better still if she would only let her alone to follow her own tastes in any lawful way. But this mamma cannot do. She is like the goose with the young cygnet, always pitying herself that her child is so unlike other people's children, wearing the girl's life out with endless complaints and impossible exactions, until at last Mary sinks into passive indifference, or bitter old-maidism, or plunges into a reckless marriage—anything, anywhere, only to get away from home.

John's case is not so hard, in one sense, he being a man and Mary only a woman, but it is far more dangerous. She may be made merely wretched; he wicked, by this narrow vexatious rule. Why should John, who is only three-and-twenty, presume to hold a different opinion on politics, religion, or aught else, from his father? Papa is the older, and of course knows best; papa has had every opportunity of forming his judgment on every subject; and he has formed it, and there it is, carefully cut and dried, easy and comfortable, without any of those doubts which are the torture and yet the life of all ardent, youthful spirits. There it is, and John must abide by it, hold his tongue, and take his obnoxious newspapers and heterodox books out of the way; which John, being a lover of peace, and trained to honourable obedience, very likely does; but he cherishes either a private contempt—we are so scornful when we are young!—or an angry rebellion against the narrow-mindedness that would compel him into his father's way of thinking, simply because it is his father's. Be the lad ever so good, a lurking sense of injustice cannot fail to chafe him, and injustice is one of the most fatal elements that, at any age, can come into the sacred relation between parent and child.

Parents know not what they are doing when they rouse this feeling—the burning, stinging consciousness of being unfairly treated, disbelieved, misjudged, selfishly or wantonly punished. You find it in the maddest mob, the roughest public school, the most riotous public assembly,

this rough, dogged sense of justice; dangerous to tamper with, even in the slightest degree. Far wiser is it for a parent to acknowledge to ever so young a child, "I was wrong, I made a mistake," than to go on enforcing a false authority, or compelling a blind obedience, driving the child to exclaim, or inly feel, which is worse, "You are not my ruler, but my tyrant!"

Yet many a severe parent is deeply loved. "My father was a stern man," you sometimes hear said, while the rare tear of self-restrained middle age falls unchecked over the grave's side. "He kept us in order. We were all rather afraid of him; but he was invariably just. He never broke his word, nor forgot his promise. He punished us, but not in passion: he ruled us strictly, but it was never to gratify his own love of power. If he had thrashed us twenty times, we should have submitted to it, because we knew that whatever he did was done for conscience' sake, and not out of wantonness or anger. I may bring up my children differently in some things—perhaps I do—but I'll never hear a word said against *him*. He was a just man—my father."

A just man, and an unselfish woman; these are the two first qualities which constitute true parenthood.

In this question of selfishness. Readers may start with horror at such an impossible anomaly as a selfish mother, a jealous exacting father; and yet such there are. Especially after the children are grown up, and nature, gratitude, and the world's opinion, all agree that no devotedness can be too perfect, no sacrifices too great. Ay! but it is one thing what the child ought to offer, and another what the parent should accept. Most lovely is it to see a daughter cheerfully resigning all the external enjoyments of life, to devote herself to the higher happiness of being the sole stay and cheer of some helpless father, or solitary sickly mother; and sweet, even amid all its daily renunciations, is the sense of duty fulfilled and comfort imparted. But to see a parent fretful, complaining, exacting, grudging the child a week's absence from home, not for love, *that* would teach self-sacrifice, but from the selfish enjoyment or ease that the accustomed companionship brings, yielding to the natural dislike of old age for any new association, and tacitly or openly keeping the young people in such bondage that they dare not ask a friend to tea, or accept an invitation—"Papa would not like it;" "Mamma might be annoyed"—this is a sight which lowers all the dignity of parenthood, and degrades filial duty into mere servitude. Yet many such cases there are, inflicted by really good parents, who are not aware that they are doing any harm, and who, in their narrow selfishness, cannot perceive that the life which is to them merely "a quiet life," suited to their age and infirmities, is slowly taking all the spirit and brightness out of younger hearts, driving the boys into dissipation and folly, and dragging "the girls" (of thirty and upwards) down into premature old-maidism, dull, discontented, helpless, and forlorn. Such a life, passing gradually on into life's melancholy decline, in a round of uninteresting, compelled duties, is as different from the free warm devotion of real filial love, as slow murder is from voluntary and glad self-sacrifice.

But here a word, lest this essay, which is especially addressed "To Parents," not being guarded, like income-tax or census papers, from any other unlawful eyes, should be taken as a loophole of excuse by readers like a certain young impertinent of my acquaintance, who, being lectured on the text, "Children obey your parents in the Lord," immediately pointed out its correlative, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger."

When we speak of a parent being "deposed," we mean merely from the exercise of an authority which has become a farce, and the exaction of an obedience which a higher law, that of conscience, renders impossible. But once a parent, always a parent. It is a bond which, though in one sense a mere accident, is, in another sense, stronger than any tie of mere personal election, since it came by the ordination of Providence. It may be a great burden, even a great misfortune, but there it is: and nothing but death can end it. No short-comings on the parental side can abrogate one atom of the plain duty of the child—submission so long as submission is possible, reverence while one fragment of respect remains; and, after that, endurance. To this generation of Young England, which is apt to think so much of itself, and so little of its elders and superiors, we cannot too strongly uphold the somewhat out of date doctrine, "Honour thy father and thy mother." Ay, though they may be very simple, common people: infirm in intellect, uneducated, unrefined: guilty of many short-comings of temper, judgment, and even glaring errors—still, honour them, and, when honour fails, bear with them.

The question then arises, what, and for how long, a child ought to bear. And here Christianity would reply with the doctrine of "seventy times seven," pleading, also, that if to a brother so much is to be forgiven, how much more so to a parent? Ay, *forgiven*. But Christianity nowhere commands that a grown-up man or woman is to sacrifice honour, conscience, peace—in fact, the real worth of a lifetime—to either brethren or parents. Therefore, when things come to this pass, that the child by "honouring" the parent would actually dishonour God, and defile his own soul by acting contrary to his conscience, there, so far, the duty ends. Let him or her assert, as an individual existence, the right of self-preservation—let them part. At least let the division be made firm and clear enough to secure independence of thought and action, so that the parent can no longer injure or oppress the child.

For lesser trials, the amount of patience and long-suffering shown by the child to the parent ought to be almost unlimited. At the same time, it is quite possible for young men or young women quietly to assert their individuality, and carry out, without any obnoxious rebellion, their

own plan of life, even if it does differ more or less from their parents. Exceeding gentleness and yet firmness, perfect respect in word and deed, straightforwardness, honesty, and yet a courageous self-dependence, will rarely fail to win their way under ever such difficult circumstances. And one hardly knows which to despise most—the cowardice which looks like reverence, and the underhandedness which shams obedience, or that open rebellion which hastily assumes the position, more degrading to itself than to the worst of parents—that of a "thankless child."

One word more, on that prime source of misery between parents and children: marriage.

Unquestionably, if any third human being has a right to interfere in the choice which two other human beings make of one another "for better, for worse," it is a parent. No one else! neither brother, sister, aunt, uncle, cousin, nor any of the numerous relations and friends who always seem to consider a projected marriage their especial business, and not that of the lovers at all. But, happily, in our country at least, none of these, nay, not even parents, have absolute legal authority, either to make or to mar the divine institution of holy matrimony. Either John or Mary may, having arrived at years of discretion, at any time walk out of the paternal house and into the nearest church, or register office, and marry anybody. And if the marriage be at all creditable, even society will wink at it; nay, perhaps smile at the "indignant parients." But a higher law than that of society enacts that such a decided step should not be taken until the last extremity.

Most natural are all the hesitations, doubts, pathetic little jealousies, and pardonable touchinesses of parents about to lose their children. It is hard to see your winsome girl, the flower of your life, plant herself, in her very sweetest bloom, in another man's garden. Hard, too, to watch your best loved son so absorbed that he has neither eyes nor ears for mother, sister, or any creature living, except "*that* young woman." Nevertheless, that a man should leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, is a law so immutable, so rational, that those who selfishly set their faces against it, parents though they be, are certain to reap their punishment. They may live to see sons, whom they have thwarted in a pure first love, turn to a coarse passion degrading and destroying to body and soul; daughters, denied a comparatively humble engagement with some honest penniless lover, fretfully "withering on the virgin thorn," or seeking loveless worldly marriages, which are the crushing out of all womanliness, everything that by making life happy, would also have made it worthy.

Sons and daughters will marry, and they ought to marry. Selfishness alone would hinder in any young man the lawful desire for a home of his own, or in any young woman the natural instinct for some one dearer than father, mother, brother, or sister, however precious these all may be. Every head, and every member of a family who loves the other members wisely and well, will not only not prevent, but encourage in every lawful way, the great necessity of life to both men and women, a prudent, constant, holy love, and a happy marriage.

One word to the parents, which of course the young people are not intended to hear.

Don't you think, my good friends, that parents as you be, with every desire for your child's happiness, it was a little unfair to give your Mary every opportunity of becoming attached to Charles, and Charles, poor fellow, all possible chance of adoring Mary? Could you expect him to see her sweet womanly ways, which make her the delight of her father's home, and not be tempted to wish her for the treasure of his own? Is it not rather hard now to turn round and object to their marrying, because, forsooth, you "never thought of such a thing," or, "Mary might have done better," or, "Charles was not the sort of person you thought she would fancy," or—last shift and a very mean one—you "rather hoped she would not marry at all, but stay with her old father and mother"?

Hold there! We will not suppose any parents in their sober senses to be guilty of such sinful selfishness. Let us pass to the next objection, commonly urged against almost all marriages, that the parties are the last persons which each was expected to choose. Expected by whom? The world at large, or their own relations? The world knows little enough, and cares less, about these matters. And sometimes, strange to say, two people who happen really to love one another, also know one another, a little better than all their respected relations put together—even their parents. They have made (or ought to—for we are granting that the case in point is no light fancy, but a deliberate attachment—there is great meaning in that old-fashioned word) that solemn election, binding for life, and—as all true lovers hope and pray—for eternity. They have cast their own lot, and are ready to abide by it. All its misfortunes or mistakes, like its happinesses, will be their own. Give your advice honestly and fully; exact a fair trial of affection, urge every precaution that your older heads and tougher hearts may suggest, and then, O parents, leave your children free. If there is one thing more than another in which sons and daughters who are capable of being trusted at all, deserve to be trusted unlimitedly, it is choice in marriage.

I have lived somewhat long in the world; have watched many a love affair "on" and "off," gathering, rising, and breaking and vanishing like a wave of the sea; have seen many a strange union turn out well, and many a seemingly smooth and auspicious one end in much unhappiness; but I never saw any single instance in which overweening irrational passionate opposition to any marriage, on the part of parents or friends, did not end in misery. It either forced on to unsuitable and hasty union some fancy or passion that might otherwise have died a peaceful natural death, or it clouded, for years at least, two innocent lives; or if this were spared and the marriage accomplished, it sowed seeds of strife and bitterness between families

which no after pacification could ever quite root out. Parents, whatever you do, be humble enough never to attempt to play Providence with your children!

But suppose it is not so. Suppose that Mary's father forbids Mr. Charles his house, or Charles's kindred, having taken an insurmountable prejudice against Mary, swear that if he marries her they will never have anything more to say to him? What are the young couple to do? Are they to sacrifice the happiness of their mutual lives? Is Charles to sail for Australia, and Mary to go mourning all her days? Some strict moralists might say, "Yes. Break your hearts, both of you, but dare not to disobey your parents." Easy-going worldly-wise reasoners might agree that there would be no heart-break in the matter, that both would soon "get over it," and marry somebody else. Possibly; but the risk is considerable, involving great responsibility to the parents.

Also to the lovers themselves, who, from the instant that they have acknowledged mutual affection, have a right to one another and a duty to perform to one another, little less sacred than that of husband and wife. Their trial is no doubt most sharp—hard in the present, sad in the future—for how bitter it must be to give to possible children the opportunity of one day saying, "You married without your parents' consent — you cannot blame me if I do the same." Yet, granting its full weight to every argument, the decision arrived at in so cruel a conjuncture must, in all calmly judging minds, be surely one and the same.

Unquestionably, a deliberate, patiently-delayed, well-thought-of marriage, open to no rational objection, and breaking no law either human or divine, ought to be carried out, with or without the consent of parents.

No clandestine proceedings can ever be justifiable. But when all efforts to break down prejudice and win esteem have failed, a son, or even a daughter, though that seems harder, has a perfect right to quit, openly and honestly, the parental roof. "Farewell," either must say—ah how sorrowfully! yet it ought to be said—"I have tried my utmost to win you over, and it is in vain. I am not called upon to sacrifice not only my own happiness but another's. The just God be judge between us. I must go."

A terrible alternative, yet there can be no other; and surely if the parents never relent—never forgive—the just God would judge it tenderly, and the "curse causeless" would not come.

But such a crisis rarely occurs in a family where the parents have themselves done their duty. No wise father would ever bring into the intimate society of his daughters a young fellow of whom, as a son-in-law, he would utterly, and with fair reasons, disapprove. And, reckless as men's passions sometimes are, very few sons of really good mothers would be likely so to have lost that ideal of womanhood which it is a mother's own fault if she does not set before all her sons, that they would desire to bring into the family any girl so altogether unworthy and objectionable that her entrance therein ought to be prevented by every lawful means. The safest and only way to make children marry rightly is by setting before them such ensamples of true manhood and womanhood that they would shrink from choosing a wife or husband inferior to their father or mother.

And when such is the case, when home is really home, what a haven of rest it is! How the children, married or single, will remember it, yearn over it, delight to revisit it, as the safest, sunniest nest. And as years roll on, and they have long ceased to be "the children" to anybody but the old father and mother, how strong is that parental influence which has succeeded the resigned authority — how perfect the love which casts out even the shadow of fear. Duty—sacrifice—the words are a mere name, a pleasant jest, if by means of them can be given the smallest pleasure to the good parents. No self-denial seems too great if it can requite them — no, they never can be requited—but show them in some degree their children's appreciation of their innumerable self-denials, never fully understood till now, when the children have become parents themselves.

And when they really grow old—though the second generation will never quite believe it—how their weaknesses are held sacred, and their utmost infirmities dear. How the third generation are taught from babyhood to consider it the greatest honour to be of any use to grandpapa and grandmamma. How their sayings are repeated, their wisdom upheld, and their virtues canonised into a family tradition, ay, years after the beloved heads, white and reverend, have been laid tenderly "under the daisies."

For parents, real parents, are never forgotten. Good old maids and kindly old bachelors may be remembered for many a year; but those others on whom has been conferred, with all the sorrows and cares, the great honour and happiness of parenthood, have mingled their life with the permanent life of the world. Their qualities descend, and their influence is felt, through uncounted generations. Thorny and difficult may have been their mortal path, many their anxieties and sharp their pangs, but they have done their work, and they inherit its blessing. They die, but in their posterity they enjoy a perpetual immortality.

NORWEGIAN SOCIALITY.

It was five o'clock on a Tuesday morning when I arrived in Christiania. I had with me a letter of introduction to a Norwegian gentleman, one of the most hospitable fellows I ever met with. We were good friends directly.

"My friend tells me," he said, glancing over the contents of the letter, "that you want to see something of our town life before going up country. Nothing could be more fortunate. I am giving a ball to-night, so come and make your observations on us. By the way," he added, "take this," giving me a pink piece of paper, with the following printed on it:

"Herr H. giver sig den Ære at indbyde Herr ——til en soirée dansante. Tirsdagen den ——

"Kol. 7."

Which, being interpreted, is:

"Mr. H. gives himself the honour to invite, &c. &c.

"Seven o'clock."

At the time appointed I arrived at my friend's house, for I purposely came early in order to be able to scrutinise the company. And here, at the outset, I must remark that I was extremely taken with the Norwegian ladies—especially the young ladies. Not that they were beautiful; our English girls far surpass their Norwegian sisters in respect of good looks. But in the first place I refer to their "get-up," of which, for my lady readers, I will endeavour to give a true, though, I fear, not a scientific description. Nearly all of them were dressed in muslin, white or coloured, with appropriate head-dresses of flowers or ribbons. There was scarcely an expensive dress in the whole room. "Sensible girls!" I soliloquised. "I wonder what it would cost my sisters to turn out for a ball like this? I should like some of our English young ladies to be here, to take a lesson in dress. Here is a good effect produced for a very little money." But here my reflections were directed into another vein by a bevy of young men, students, officers, and so forth, who came in hat in hand. What on earth do they bring their hats into a ball-room for? Ah! perhaps they are afraid of losing them. Not a bad idea! But I wonder what they will do with them when the dancing begins? Surely not put them on? However, after having paid their respects to the host, they proceeded carefully to place them in out-of-the-way corners, while others, who did not, I suppose, mean dancing, kept theirs in hand for the rest of the evening.

Just then the folding-doors of an adjacent room were thrown open, and supper was announced.

Another surprise for me. What! Supper before dancing! So it was. And an excellent plan, too, I'm inclined to think. For, don't you, young ladies, always enter into the spirit of dancing all the more, after you have had a little sip of iced champagne? Don't you, young gentlemen, often then first get rid of that shyness and reserve which are so peculiar to you? You know you do.

The supper was an elegant affair; but a standing-up one, as is universally the case in Norway. As I had only just dined, I became a passive spectator. I observed that the gentlemen, as soon as they had handed their partners in, left them to shift for themselves, while they looked after number one. But the dear creatures seemed quite used to such treatment. There were no sweets on the table; all the dishes were savoury dishes. (By the way, Russian peas seemed very popular.) But in another little room were laid out ices, jellies, creams, cakes, flanked by numberless bottles of champagne. The ladies had the first entrée into the Chamber of Sweets, and it was not till they turned out, that we turned in.

The band now began to strike up in the ball-room: a signal for the gentlemen to adjourn thither.

"You dance?" said my host.

"Oh yes; certainly!"

"Come, then. I'll introduce you to that girl in pink; she is dying to dance with an Englishman."

She was an uncommonly charming girl, the daughter of a pastor in the Loffoten Isles, and had never been in Christiania before. She rejoiced in the name of Katinka. I naturally thought she might be shy, as this was the first time she had ever been in a town. Not a bit of it! She had plenty to say for herself; could talk English very well, though she had never heard it spoken by an Englishman before; and was thoroughly well up in English literature.

I never danced so much, nor enjoyed an evening so much, as I did this evening, my first in Northern Europe. It is quite impossible to help liking the young ladies. They are so simple, unreserved, conversational, well informed, and un-coquettish.

Dancing was kept up with spirit till twelve, when another edition of supper on a minor scale made its appearance.

"Well! And what do you think of us in this out-of-the-way country?" said my friend, who prevailed on me to stay behind and smoke a cigar after his guests had gone.

"Think! I think I would like to cut the Temple, and come and live here for good and all!"

He laughed, and said, as I took my leave,

"By the way, I forgot to tell you I have been requested to bring you with me to-morrow to a grand dinner-party. You'll see something new there, if I mistake not. *God Nat!*"

After bathing next morning in the Fjord, in close proximity to his Majesty Carl John the Fifteenth—when I had an opportunity of seeing rather more than one usually sees of royalty—I repaired to my friend's house, to be taken out to dinner.

The Statsraad W. lived during the summer in a villa about half a mile from town. Indeed, nearly all the merchants and wealthier people reside in the country during the summer months. These villas, which I noticed as presenting a very picturesque effect, on sailing up the Fjord, are generally built of wood, and painted either a pale pink, white, or yellow. From the second or third stories there are balconies, and on the ground floor there is a verandah, connected by glass doors with the house. One never sees a carpet during the summer, and not usually even in the winter. The floors are painted and varnished, and convey to the mind an assurance of coolness and absence of dust: desirable advantages in a climate which, for a short time in the year, resembles that of India.

There were, perhaps, a hundred and fifty guests assembled when we entered. I wondered how we were all going to be accommodated.

"I dare say you do not have these sort of dinner-parties in England," said a young lady to

me, whom I had met the evening before. "We always, at such parties, stand up to dinner." My answer was cut short by our being ushered into the dining-room.

As I wished to do at Rome as they did at Rome, I first turned to a little side-table, on which were arranged sardines, anchovies, "Throndhjem aquavit," and other appetite-ticklers. I won't describe the dinner; suffice it to say, it was most excellent. But I would earnestly recommend any one going to Christiania, to practise dining standing up before leaving home; for it requires an uncommon knack to be able to manage it properly. Try; take a plate with a bit of chicken, a slice of ham, some peas, and potatoes on it, for instance. Hold this in your left hand—for all the chairs and side-tables are monopolised by the elderly people—and cut up and eat with your right. In the mean time, keep constantly drinking wine with imaginary guests, and get your sisters to push gently up against you from all sides. And withal you should not omit to pay some attention to the study of attitudes. Assume the best posture for preserving your "gravity in a state of stability," while at the same time seek to avoid a straddle, as if you were on the deck of a rolling steamer, otherwise you may be animadverted on by the company. You must not feel annoyed if, just as you have succeeded in cutting up the chicken and ham in nice little bits, and have relinquished the knife for the fork, a jolt from behind disturbs the direction a mouthful is taking, and sends it outside your shirt-front instead of inside. Neither must you be irritated at feeling that some one is pouring a plateful of gravy down your back. I upset a glass of wine over a young gentleman's legs (an elderly man of stout basis, who bumped against me, was the cause), and I am ashamed to say that I looked hard in another direction, as if I knew nothing at all about the matter. Another piece of advice I would venture to suggest—especially if you dislike using dirty forks—is, that you keep a tight hold of your own. Forks are always at a premium, and if you put yours down for one moment, you'll never see it again. I cannot suggest the modest stranger's doing anything better with his wine-glass than putting it in his pocket when not in immediate use; for I am convinced that not one of the ladies or gentlemen present drank out of the same glass twice.

After dinner, which was over about six, the gentlemen strolled out into the grounds to smoke. The ladies don't at all object to the smell of the fragrant weed, and nearly all the clergy indulge in it. You can judge for yourself, when I inform you that in 1855, when the population consisted of one million four hundred and ninety thousand and forty-seven souls—I like exactitude—the imports of tobacco amounted to about three millions three hundred thousand pounds; which gives an allowance of two pounds and a quarter to each soul, not deducting women or children. One gentleman to whom I was introduced informed me that he always had a smoke the last thing at night, after he had got into bed; and, from some incidental remarks he made, I discovered that he was a married man, and occupied the same apartment as his wife. Cigars, coffee, and its attendant Curaçoa, having been duly appreciated, we returned to the house, and danced till twelve o'clock. And though the party had thus lasted eight hours, it had been throughout an uncommonly pleasant one, and the time had passed very quickly.

"As you have now seen what we can do in the way of balls and dinner-parties," said my friend, as we strolled home in the soft twilight (for it was so light, that I could easily have read the smallest print), "you shall see us as we are every day. I will take you to a friend's house to-morrow, and will not tell him anything about it beforehand."

If the dinner-party the day before had been costly and profuse, the fare to-day was homely, and rather sparing. The dinner consisted of fish-soup—a dish my pen is quite unable to describe, but which I should pronounce very nasty; roast chickens stuffed with parsley, about the size of partridges; and Multer-berries and cream. As a rule, Norwegian families do not eat meat more than three or four times a week; and a pudding—at least what an Englishman calls a pudding—is unknown.

Dinner being finished, as if at a preconcerted signal, everybody arose and pushed (not lifted) his chair back against the wall, thus producing an immense deal of unnecessary noise on the uncarpeted floor. And then everybody shook hands with the host, and with everybody else, and said, "Tak for Mad."

I was amused by an anecdote an English lady who had married a Norwegian told me. It seems they resolved upon living as much as possible in the English style, and therefore had meat and pudding every day. The servant had the same fare. But she could not eat it; she pined after her milk-soup, salt herrings, and potatoes; and actually lodged a complaint with the police against her master, because he *would* give her meat and pudding instead.

I should like to take Jeames, or John Thomas, or Betty the cook, over to Norway, and treat them to servants' fare there. A month or two of it would do them all a world of good! How they would appreciate the cold leg of mutton when they got back; and how heartily table-ale at tenpence a gallon would be relished after nothing but coffee and cold water!

THE STORY OF THE STONE-EYES.

CHAPTER I.

The romance of the railway has seldom furnished a more extraordinary narrative than that which I now compile from the hasty jottings of my note-book, in June, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight.

I had made a random dash at a distant point by a certain cross-country railway, whose eccentric sinuosities, surpassing my very worst anticipations, finally deposited me on a deserted platform — Something's Den — then, withdrawing

into an adjacent shed, gloomily expired. The engine departed to its rest in a grass-grown siding, the driver to his, in a cottage beyond human ken—"aside of them rises"—pointing in the direction of a mountainous country, apparently about five miles distant.

No station-master was visible. Howbeit, an elderly hermit, in the costume of a porter of the Victorian age, patiently explained to me the fact that, having overpassed my proper "junction," I had before me a residence at the Den of four hours thirty-two minutes.

What to do? The landscape was unattractive; besides, it drizzled, mizzled—what *is* the damp expression that signifies a substance equidistant between nothing and rain? Books I had none, nor even a penknife, wherewith to improve the time and trees. There was, it is true, on the wall of the station itself, a small but choice collection of high art. Thence I learned how that Sampson Barkwise Pecklebody (address in full), having, one fatal morn (specified), permitted himself to occupy a certain class of carriage not usually associated with the description of ticket he had previously taken, was mulcted by indignant justices (set forth) in the unmitigated penalty of Thirty Shillings and costs—the permanent proclamation of which little incident, on the wall, must have imparted a peculiar interest to Mr. Pecklebody's subsequent journeyings by that line.

The Bed sent by Post—not only sent, but actually prepaid — perpetual enigma to the untravelled mind—presented its graceful form. Leisure there was to ponder why Messrs. Kornyman should alone dispense the pure article. Whether those gentlemen found it a commercial success, or whether a proud sense of moral rectitude was their sole reward. Ha! Frith? No. It is but a bold episode of London life, by a hand unknown, importing pictorially that Messrs. Bobbs and Thirkettle have engaged two-thirds of the western side of Regent-street for the display of their unrivalled assortment of summer stuffs. A royal equipage has just rolled heavily from the door, surcharged with purchases. The Lord Mayor, dissatisfied with eastern establishments, comes prancing up, attended (as usual, on shopping expeditions) by his faithful sheriffs, and other civic functionaries, among whom I think I faintly recognise the toastmaster. Three officers of her Majesty's Life Guards, in complete cuirass, about to enter in quest of their summer stuffs, make way for a right reverend dignitary, his wife, and a procession of fair daughters, so extended that it has to be continued round the corner.

"As the literature of Something's Den is quite capable of being exhausted before train-time, allow me to contribute to it," said a pleasant voice beside me.

The speaker, a man about sixty, perfectly gentlemanlike in appearance and address, had stepped out from the booking-office, and was offering me a handful of papers.

"Two poor fellows marooned on this inhospitable shore," he continued, laughing, "need not stand on any ceremony, I think. It will be a good three hours before succour reaches us."

We gradually slid into conversation, pacing up and down the sheltered portion of the platform. The stranger talked easily and agreeably. I had seldom met with an Englishman who overcame, with such unobtrusive facility, the reserve of first acquaintance. An hour flew past, and, before its expiration, we had become as old and intimate friends.

The weather had by this time cleared a little, and there had become visible the grey top of an old mansion, with one tower, half smothered in fine woodland, covering a slope some two miles off.

"Whose residence is that, yonder?" inquired my companion of the hermit-porter, who, seated on a retired bench, was dropping a sharp-pointed knife, with singularly inaccurate aim, at a disabled humble-bee, squatted on the soft boards. Having, at the moment, nearly got the range of his victim, the hermit did not deem it expedient to suspend his fire, but simply replied that he didn't justly know. "'Twarn't nobody's. There was—summot wrong. Ghosts 'fested it—leastways, them top rooms—Gardener's wife—below. (The bee, suddenly impressed with a vague presentiment of danger, gave a convulsive shudder, and drew up one leg.) Never heerd the rights on it. Howsever, nobody can't — live — (bee dissevered longitudinally, presenting the remarkable appearance of two half bees in animated conversation) —live there, they can't."

"I was curious," observed the stranger, as we turned away, "to hear what he would say. That place is Mournivale, the scene of one of the most extraordinary series of incidents that ever found place in England's domestic annals. If you wish it, seeing that we have abundant time, I will give you the substance of the history."

CHAPTER II.

Thirty years ago (resumed my friend), I commenced my professional career of medicine, with the ridiculous blunder of purchasing what is popularly called the "good will" of this district. I could have had it on precisely the same terms on which my predecessor had created it. My neighbours were benevolence itself, and—short of being at any time, within my recollection, in the least indisposed—did everything in their power to make me comfortable and happy. There was excellent trout fishing, of which certain industrious otters, and myself, seemed sole proprietors; and between us the best feeling always prevailed, they sparing my favourite pools, and I delicately avoiding the immediate neighbourhood of their dwellings; while my practice, which comprised two healthy farms, a robust toll-house, and the beer-shop, left ample leisure for my favourite sport, besides watching my busier neighbours.

Do not imagine that the parties I have referred to represented the entire population of the district. Somewhere among the trees lurk two little villages, one, in right of its superior size,

known as Great Covey, the other, availing itself of the fact of its dozen dwellings being disposed in two ranks, calling itself Covey-le-Street. The spirit of rivalship between these two powerful communities was constantly breaking out in various ways, and so bitter was the jealousy, that, at one period, scarcely any intercourse was permitted between them: a state of things the more to be regretted, since (a curious fact) the society of the greater Covey was composed almost entirely of bachelors, while that of Covey-le-Street embraced exclusively ladies yet unsummoned from the awaiting ranks of spinsterhood.

With this little non-community I had no professional concern. The whole was presided over by one of the bachelor brethren, who, tolerated as a necessary evil, went and came between the two camps, a just object of jealousy and suspicion to both. Charley Tincture was by nature a merry pleasant little fellow, and, being only fifty-seven, was looked upon by the elder brethren of Great Covey as little more than a boy. Nevertheless, it was now thirty-five years since Charley had been jilted, and had cast from his soul every thought of matrimony. Many a pleasant evening have I passed in Charley's society, at his snug lodging over the post-office (he was rich enough to have had a good house to himself, but preferred that celibate flavour which attaches to lodgings), and to this circumstance I owe the power of making you acquainted with the story of Mournivale.

The vast old mansion, after being for some time untenanted, had, just before my arrival, passed into the absolute possession of Sir George Corsellis. This gentleman had held a high military post in India, and had brought home a reputation the reverse of prepossessing. He was represented as a stern proud individual, gloomy and unsocial in disposition, a tyrant in his profession, a tyrant in his home. He had (said rumour, coming down like a black mist before him) resigned his command, in the hope of averting a threatened inquiry into some undue exercise of authority—something, it was even whispered, scarcely distinguishable from what men call murder—and he had come hither, with his lady, intending, if unmolested, to pass the remainder of his days among the deep woods of Mournivale.

The very first proceedings of the new proprietor were singular enough to provoke comment. He had fixed midnight for his arrival at the mansion with his family: directing the land-steward, Harper, who had managed the property for some years, and whom he had retained in office, to be in attendance at that hour, and alone.

Precisely at twelve, a hollow rumble of wheels came up from the grass-grown avenue, and Harper, throwing open the tall iron gates which gave immediate approach to the house, admitted a procession consisting of three gloomy old coaches, and a black van. From the first of these vehicles, alighted three dark figures, so closely muffled that it was only by a comparison of height that the steward understood them to represent his master (whom, indeed, he had already seen) and two females, one of a stature almost diminutive. Both, on entering the house, retired instantly to a suite of apartments upon which a regiment of painters and decorators had been employed for at least a month.

The other carriages were filled with domestics, English and foreign, who immediately, without exchanging a word, set to work in their different departments as if they had lived at Mournivale all their previous lives. So quaint and singular was the whole proceeding, that the simple-minded steward felt as if he were moving about, in the midst of a band of beings of a different nature—whose supernatural gifts placed them alike beyond his help and control. They made civil gestures, and seemed to regard him with consideration enough; but none of them, none even of the English, spoke directly to him. And the language that did reach his ear had a curious rolling accent, such as he had never heard.

Determined to break the spell, Harper singled out a member of the mysterious company who appeared to discharge the office of cook, and who, being fattish, might prove good tempered. Accosting her as she glided by, he civilly inquired by what name he should address her.

"Morgan le Fay," replied the woman, sharply, baring her glistening teeth in a sort of snarl.

"Morgan Liffey!" thought Harper. "Irish, eh?"

Feeling, or fancying, that his presence was not acceptable to the new comers, the excellent steward, who at present occupied one of the keepers' lodges, took a hasty leave, and withdrew.

"Hot dinners at half-past one in the morning!" thought Mr. Harper, as he tumbled into bed; "I wonder at what time they sup!"

CHAPTER III.

The external doings of the new proprietor were equally remarkable. It had been decided in the neighbourhood that one of his first acts of ownership would be to thin the overgrown woods, wherein were thousands of noble specimens of oak, beech, elm, and fir—nay, even the fragrant cedar—positively pining for the axe. An enterprising timber merchant had prepared a tender, and only waited for what he considered a decent interval before presenting it. Sir George, however, did nothing of the kind. Contrariwise, on the only open ground near the mansion—a small green knoll—he immediately planted a handsome cluster of quick-growing shrubs and trees.

In a word, lonely as the place already was, Corsellis encircled the entire park with a new and strong palisade. Around the gardens he raised a lofty wall. He purchased, at a great expense, a certain alleged right of way, which, as the public never used it, was disputed by their representatives with tenfold obstinacy. He discouraged any advances on the part of his country neighbours, and rarely set foot beyond his own domain.

"Mad!" pronounced Sir Hugh Quickset, a neighbouring squire.

Sir George, who was in the commission, attended the next bench of magistrates. The lunatic took the lead in all the proceedings, decided a matter which involved great legal difficulty, snuffed out the pert clerk who had hitherto guided the decisions of the bench, and, with cool superior nods, took his leave, not to appear again. But Sir Hugh Quickset was silenced.

"Under a cloud," affirmed old Purkiss, of Great Covey: a retired solicitor, whose mental habit inclined to the suspicious. (If report were to be trusted, none had enjoyed better opportunities of judging what might be the aspect of a gentleman under the aforesaid atmospherical pressure than Mr. Purkiss himself!) But a royal duke who was staying in the county, rode across fifteen miles to visit Mournivale, stayed half the day, and walked through Covey-le-Street arm in arm with his host, in earnest conversation—Mr. Purkiss was bowled out.

Intense became the curiosity excited by the manifest desire of Sir George to conceal the course of his domestic life from every eye. The powers of conjecture were exhausted in imagining theories of explanation for the complete seclusion in which the family, the two ladies especially, were understood to live. In respect to this, the steward, Harper, was as profoundly ignorant as everybody else. Not only had he never seen his lady's face or heard her voice, but no intelligible allusion to her among the servants had ever reached his ear. He knew, however, that a Creole maid, called Eisa, was her principal attendant, and that she did occasionally give audience to Morgan le Fay.

"My lady calls," the latter would say, with a start; sometimes amid the clatter of the kitchen; sometimes when not a sound but the ticking of the clock broke the dead hush. And away she would hasten.

Harper observed that none of the domestics ever went abroad, except on Sundays, when such as were English attended the little church, and, service over, marched back again, being readmitted by the huge Dutch porter, Hans Troek, who never quitted his post by night or day, and the monotony of whose presence inspired Harper with such an insane desire to kick him, that, but for his native slowness of apprehension, Herr Troek must have read it in his face twenty times a day. Harper had to pass him so often, for on *him* devolved almost all the communication that was held with the outer world. In the forenoon the steward transacted with his master, any business relating to the estate. After that, he executed commissions for Morgan le Fay. At nine in the evening Harper found that he was expected to take his leave; and what went on after *that*, in the mysterious household, was a strange and gloomy secret.

CHAPTER IV.

"But about Lady Corsellis," was the perpetual question of the spinsterhood of Covey-le-Street, "who, and what can she be?"

And Covey the Great replied (through Mr. Tincture) that they would run any reasonable risk (except matrimony) to learn.

For months the neighbourhood was in a state of agreeable horror, for where mystery is there will be terror, and it got to be believed that Lady Corsellis, of Mournivale, was not a spectacle for human eyes to see. I can hardly explain through what fluctuations the general faith settled down (but so it did) into a conviction that, though elsewise fair of face, the unhappy lady had the snout of a pig! At all events, this belief triumphed. The district was rich in mast and acorns. In consideration of his consort, Sir George had suffered his beech and oak to stand!

There were still, it is true, dissentients to the porcine theory. At the Jolly Bachelor, in Great Covey, conducted by Mr. Brutus Bulfinch, the pig's face was opposed by a still more terrible surmise. It is doubtful whether the host would have admitted anybody into his parlour, or the barmaid (an elderly female, unmarried) executed her office with any degree of alacrity on behalf of one, who did not faithfully believe that it was either a pig's head or the devil: with a strong bias towards the latter opinion.

No wonder; for the very nephew of the host had had a glimpse of the phenomenon.

Coming home late from a distant market, Jack Bulfinch took it into his head to shorten the road, by cutting across the grounds of Mournivale. This was before the erection of the new wall. He had easily scaled the then-existing defences, had passed the mansion, and was about to dive into the plantation, when the great front door swung suddenly open, and out *it* came, walking tamely beside Sir George himself. Jack, by his own account, had barely time to notice that my Lady Corsellis had immense eyes, like lurid lanterns, which glowed even through a thick protrusive sort of covering that veiled her head and face; likewise, a tail of such prodigious length, that Sir George, with much seeming politeness, carried a portion of it across his arm. This tail went near to discredit Jack's, but for the confirmation the whole story received from the deposition (made rather with, than upon, oath) of Cephas Pudgebrook, the second gardener, who rolled the terrace on the following day, and observed that it bore distinct traces of a goat or pig, "dibbled regular all along." Mr. Pudgebrook was not a little horrified to learn that he had been actually engaged for two hours (all the while whistling careless secular tunes) in smoothing out the footprints of the enemy of mankind!

Curiosity was at its utmost stretch, when an order was one day received by Timothy Beatle, the purblind clerk, to have new hassocks placed in the Mournivale pew. Hassocks! They were, then, unquestionably coming to church next Sunday. At all events, Sir George and—and the other—would come.

The Reverend Benedict Loanham, of Great Covey, prepared his best discourse. The number of those who attended their religious duties on

that day, transcended the recollection of the oldest inhabitant. The congregation were already seated, when the Lord of Mournivale, accompanied by two veiled ladies, entered by a private chancel, the party taking their seats in full view of the assembly.

General Sir George Corsellis was, at this time, a man past middle-age, of colossal build, massive head, broad nose, and eyebrows so redundant as almost to emulate little beards. The prevailing expression of this far from attractive face, was stern even to ferocity; but that it was capable of much softening was apparent even to purblind Timothy Beatle—who, throughout the service, addressed his responses personally to Sir George, adjured him in a stentorian voice to join in the performance of the psalmody, and having, in effect, bestowed upon the astonished gentleman his undivided attention, was, finally, in a position to aver that, whenever he (Corsellis) glanced at one of the veiled creatures at his side, his face changed "from a devil's to an angel's."

The service drew to a conclusion without the veils being for an instant removed. It must be acknowledged that good Mr. Loanham (whose discourse had been directed against the indulgence of idle curiosity, and prying into mysteries out of our path) did his very best to advance the secret wishes of his flock: prolonging his address, by the aid of impromptu interpolations, to an extent which, under any other circumstances, would have been considered inordinate.

It was all in vain. Even every sermon must have an end—so had Mr. Loanham's—and, with a reluctant blessing, the congregation dispersed. When a reasonable time had been allowed for all undesigning persons to withdraw, the Mournivale party quitted their pew; she, who was presumed to be Lady Corsellis, leaning upon her husband's stalwart arm; the dwarf-like figure of their companion bringing up the rear. Every pretext for lingering about the little churchyard had by this time been exhausted. One individual, alone, stood rooted to the spot—Miss Tiffany. This lady remained, as it were, under a vow.

Miss Tiffany represented the strong-minded element in the circle of Covey-le-Street. To *her*, appeal was wont to be made in all such cases as, under ordinary social circumstances, would have necessitated the interposition of the masculine mind; and, hitherto, Miss Tiffany had been true to her position and herself. It was alleged of her, and *by* her, that, in no purpose on which she had really set her heart, had she ever been baffled. In a perhaps unguarded moment, she had pledged herself to see and to speak with one or both of the mysterious ladies of Mournivale. She was here to redeem that pledge.

Sending away her maid, Marian, to a little distance, she herself took up a position halfway between the church and the corner of an avenue of elms which formed a by-path to Mournivale.

As the three figures moved past, she touched the dress of her who walked alone.

"A thousand pardons," said Miss Tiffany. "May I be allowed to sp——?"

The stranger made a sort of impatient bow, and continued her way.

Miss Tiffany, somewhat piqued by this reception, returned to the charge.

"Again, I ask your pardon," she said. "I assure you, I am not a beggar. I wish merely to inquire what is Lady Corsellis's pleasure concerning the proposed new sch——?"

The stranger put her hand upon her arm, as if to impose silence, but, with the other, pointed forward in such a manner as to invite Miss Tiffany to accompany her. Thus, maid Marian, watching in the distance, saw the four disappear into the avenue.

Another minute, and her mistress was seen returning; but with a step so strange and uncertain, and a demeanour altogether so unusual, that Marian started off hastily to meet her. To Marian's alarm and surprise, Miss Tiffany took not the slightest notice of her; but reeled on, as it were, in the direction of home, her eyes fixed and staring, her face pale as ashes, her hands working wildly, as though in desperate endeavour to keep off some invisible assailant.

"Horror, horror!" was the only reply her terrified attendant could obtain, in answer to her repeated inquiries.

Arrived at home, Miss Tiffany went straight to her chamber, and, locking the door, remained in strict seclusion until the evening. Then she rang for Marian, and gave her certain directions for the morrow, which raised that young lady's surprise and consternation to their climax.

On the following day, there appeared a notice in the front garden, describing that desirable cottage-residence as to be let, furnished or unfurnished, for an indefinite period, with instant possession.

To the numerous inquirers, answer was returned that Miss Tiffany had been summoned to the sick-bed of a relative, who, though near in blood, was somewhat distant in body, being, in fact, resident in Australasia. Consequently, Miss Tiffany must not be expected back immediately.

Miss Tiffany had, in real deed, departed that morning, and all the explanation afforded of this sudden resolution, was contained in the following note, addressed to an intimate friend:

"Good-by, Sophy dear. Love to all friends. *Shun Mournivale.* Beware of curiosity. Seek to know no more.

"Your unhappy friend,

"THERESA."

I will not dwell upon the hubbub created by this event in the community of either Covey. My business is with facts, and the next fact in my recollection (putting aside innumerable unsubstantiated rumours concerning the doings of the family at Mournivale), is a visit paid one evening by the steward Harper to my friend Charley Tincture.

Harper, who was naturally a hearty fellow,

with a frank open manner of speech, now looked anxious and careworn, and spoke in a hesitating perplexed way which Charley could not understand.

He apologised for calling at that late hour—half-past nine—on the ground that he did not wish his visit known, and, presently untying a blue handkerchief which he carried in his hand, placed upon the table something that had very much the appearance of half a cold apple-tart.

"I wish you, sir," he said, "to be kind enough to examine this, and tell me if 'tis good for a Christian's dinner. If *'tis*, why, there's an end; if not, why then I've got something more to say."

Tincture made him sit down, and retired to his surgery, sending, in pursuance of an idea that occurred to him, for myself, who happened to be passing the evening in his neighbourhood. Together we carefully analysed the viand, and, applying the usual tests, detected the presence of a certain vegetable poison, in sufficient quantity to destroy a dozen human lives.

On hearing this result, Harper turned so white and sick, that Charley had to administer a glass of brandy, after which the worthy steward commenced his tale, with the startling information that the pastry we had had under our consideration, together with numerous other delicacies, similarly seasoned, formed the daily bill of fare at Mournivale.

For a long time past—in fact, ever since the arrival of the family—the steward's attention had been from time to time attracted by a remarkable proceeding on the part of Morgan le Fay. Every dish, whether prepared by her own hands or those of assistants, received a slight addition, sometimes in a liquid, sometimes pulverine form, the materials being obtained from a sort of cabinet built into the wall, and secured with a small but massive metal door, of which Morgan le Fay always kept the key. This ceremony, though not absolutely performed by stealth, always seemed to be invested with a certain degree of mystery. It was etiquette to notice it as little as possible; but Harper could not help observing that every dish, after undergoing this singular preparation, was regarded with a respect and tenderness almost reverential, was handled with the extremest caution, and, when returned disabled from the dinner-table, was consigned by the high priestess, Morgan le Fay, to a receptacle expressly constructed for the purpose, from whence it never again emerged.

Perpetually haunted by this mystery, Harper at length conceived an irresistible desire to convince himself, by actual experiment, that a strange and horrible fancy, that would sometimes intrude itself into his mind, was erroneous and absurd. One day, by great good fortune, an opportunity occurred of securing a portion of apple-tart that had been almost half consumed in the parlour. Mr. Harper, possessing himself of an unfortunate dog whose condition of skin rendered his abrupt decease a matter of congratulation both to himself and mankind, presented him with a small portion of the pie, on receipt of which the unfortunate animal uttered one broken howl, stretched himself out, and expired. Under the circumstances, Mr. Harper at once secured the remainder of the tart in his handkerchief, and hastened to submit it to medical scrutiny.

The case was curious, and difficult. In spite of the uncommon dietary, it was certain that nothing had happened at Mournivale to warrant legal interference. No enactment restricts the indulgence in arsenic, or belladonna, so long as they suit the constitution. It was ultimately agreed to keep the matter quiet, Harper undertaking to report to us, any new incident of an unusual nature that might come under his observation.

CHAPTER V.

It was not very long before a new phenomenon revealed itself. The summer was well advanced, and had been unusually sultry. The windows of Mournivale, like those of less mysterious mansions, remained open, or, at least, unshuttered, long after dark. It began to be declared that the sounds and appearances distinguishable through these windows, were not to be accounted for by any rules of ordinary domestic life. Regularly after nightfall—perhaps about ten o'clock—(as the country people asserted) the entire upper portion of the vast mansion became suddenly illuminated with a mighty red lustre, such as might proceed from the seething crater of a volcano at the close of an eruption. From thence were heard to issue loud and agonising shrieks, varied with the notes of some strange instrument of the trumpet kind, now and then a clash of cymbals, and, not unfrequently, a low horrible sound, which could only be described as a lion imitating the laugh of a man.

From midnight until one o'clock, the watchers declared, there usually reigned a profound silence. About the last-named hour, a long hoarse cry, unlike the voice of man or animal, pealed through the house, and, in a second, the lights in every room were extinguished like one. At that period, the rising ground planted by Corsellis was not covered with wood of sufficient growth to conceal the upper windows, and the crimson glow proceeding from them was plainly visible from the neighbouring village.

Speculation was busy over these strange doings, when a new and important circumstance occurred. Harper, having some business to transact with his master, repaired to the mansion one morning rather before his usual hour. Sir George was out, on horseback. As the steward retraced his steps through the hall, a violent shriek, twice or thrice repeated, struck his ear.

Yielding to the impulse of the moment, and imagining, as he afterwards explained, that some person's clothes had caught fire, he bounded up the hitherto sacred stair, and stood at the door of the first of the suite of apartments inhabited by the family. It was from hence that the shrieks had proceeded. The door was ajar. He pushed

it open. All was hushed as death; but, on a rich sofa, lay a slight female figure, with the face turned away. Beside her knelt the diminutive form of the third member of the party—both of them motionless, as though carved in stone.

Suddenly, without any change in the attitude of the body or limbs, the head of the kneeling figure began to turn. Revolving slowly, as on a pivot, the face came completely round, and fronted Harper, as he stood rooted to the spot. And *what* a face! Wrought in grey granite, with a hideous carved grin, great white eyeballs in which no pupils were visible, a huge mocking mouth, seeming to dart out, like tongues, spiculæ of lurid flame!

Harper—man as he was, and no timid man—thrilled with a nameless fear, made but three steps down stairs, and never stopped till he reached his own domain.

In relating this strange story to us, I observed that nothing seemed to have impressed him so strongly as the stony gleam of the woman's, or fiend's, eyes. His constant reference to this feature, no doubt, led to the habit we subsequently acquired, of talking of the personage alluded to as "Mournivale Stone-Eyes."

Many were inclined to discredit the whole narrative; but Harper silenced these detractors by giving notice to his employer, of his desire to quit his service as soon as arrangements could be made; and, as he had secured no provision for himself, it was only reasonable to believe him actuated by a genuine repugnance to connect himself with the haunted mansion.

The event next in order, I believe, was this:

The Mournivale property "marches," as they say in Scotland, on one side with that of Squire Harlbutt: a country gentleman of considerable wealth, but who mixed little with the county society, and had punctiliously avoided his extraordinary neighbour. He was a magistrate, and had been one of those present on the occasion when Corsellis had so defiantly taken the lead in the proceedings of the bench. He had returned home not a little disgusted at the treatment he and his brethren had experienced.

It happened that Mr. Harlbutt received a visit from his nephew, a captain in the army, who had been for some time in a local command. He had commanded a frontier corps at the Cape, employed in repelling the incursions of the Caffres: a duty requiring both courage and vigilance, and not without a certain smack of adventure greatly to the taste of the young officer.

The mysteries of Mournivale were not long in reaching his ears, and Captain Harlbutt at once came to the conclusion that he could not beguile his three weeks' visit at Fairwoods better than by unravelling the same.

It was, I think, on the third or fourth day after his arrival, that a party, organised for the purpose, assembled by different paths after nightfall at a certain spot in the woodland. It consisted of Harlbutt, Charley Tincture, Harper, a trusty keeper of Harlbutt's famous for seeing in the dark, and myself.

There was a bright August moon, but she was occasionally veiled by dense masses of cloud. We pushed our approaches nearer and nearer to the house, on the side not surrounded by gardens, and from which a small side-entrance alone gave access to the grounds. Just within a cedar-copse we sat in a circle, like a group of gentlemanly burglars awaiting their opportunity, the red sparks of our cigars alone revealing the whereabouts of each individual.

Harlbutt was in the middle of a Caffre story, when an exclamation from our look-out, the keeper, directed our attention to the mansion. The windows, as usual, from one end to the other had suddenly become one blaze of lurid splendour. To this succeeded the accustomed shrieks and other sounds; the horrible unearthly laugh, and, what Harper had never noticed on former occasions, a faint wild wail, like that of a funeral chant, sung by many voices, at a distance so remote as only to be occasionally audible.

Prepared as he was for something unusual, Harlbutt was struck dumb with genuine amazement at what he heard and saw.

"An orgy of demons in a country gentleman's house, in the nineteenth century!" he muttered, in a bewildered way.

Remark and conjecture were soon abandoned, and we continued to watch the glowing windows in silence—silence as deep as that which now prevailed in the haunted dwelling. As usual, from twelve o'clock not a sound was heard. But, as the distant village clock struck *one*, the hoarse wild cry pealed forth. Out went the lights like a single candle, and all was dark and still. We rose to go.

"Hark!" exclaimed Harlbutt, stopping us. "I hear a knell!"

We listened. A low muffled sound, like a passing bell, came faintly on our ears.

"The door is opening," said the quick-sighted keeper.

Opening it was. And out issued a curious procession. A bier, or stretcher, covered with a pall, on which lay a corpse in white, was carried by four female figures in mourning-dresses. Behind these walked Sir George Corsellis, his head bare, a lady leaning on his arm; last came another woman, whom Harper recognised by the bright moonlight as Morgan le Fay. She led, by a chain, an animal which, but for its head, which was a dog's, would seem to be a lion, having the magnificent mane and tufted tail which characterise the monarch of the forest.

This strange pageant, made still more singular by the intermittent moon-gleams, at first (somewhat to our embarrassment) took the direction of our ambush; but, on approaching the covert, it inclined to the right, and passed to the rear of the copse. It was at this time so near, that Harper recognised the body on the bier as that of the fearful being we had been accustomed to speak of as "Mournivale Stone-Eyes." A sudden dash of moonlight fell upon the scene, and revealed the terrible grey face, and stone-white open eyes, as clearly as by day.

It was hastily agreed to thread the copse as

quietly as possible, and follow the progress of these strange obsequies. Captain Harlbutt and the keeper, as the most experienced bushmen, led the way. The latter, in a few minutes, reported that the party had entered the copse—at a somewhat open part—in the rear, and might be seen by us without discovery, completing the ceremonial of burial. The grave must have been previously prepared—for scarcely had we taken up our positions, when the body was lifted from the bier, and lowered by means of long white scarfs deep into the earth. This done, there was a pause; when, apparently at a signal from Corsellis, Morgan le Fay approached the edge of the grave—leading the dog lion, from which the others seemed to shrink instinctively. She wound her arms in the beast's shaggy mane, drawing him fearlessly towards her, until his sharp nose and glowing eyes were over her shoulder. As she held him in this attitude, Corsellis made a sudden step forward. There was a gleam of something—a blow—a broken roar—and the animal rolled over and over into the open grave. The latter was then carefully filled and smoothed down, level with the surrounding surface; leaves and sprays were scattered lightly over it; and then Corsellis gave his arm to his lady, and the whole party returned to the mansion: the servants chatting gaily, and apparently only deterred by the stately presence of their master stalking on before, from enjoying a dance by moonlight.

So odd and unnatural had been the whole affair, that we could have easily fancied it a dream. No one present attempted a solution of the mystery. All we could do, was, to note by measurement the exact spot of this extraordinary interment; after which we returned home, consulting as to the steps that should next be taken.

A meeting was arranged for the following day at Fairwoods, when various opinions were expressed: the prevailing one being to the effect that some deed of violence had been perpetrated, to which it was our obvious duty to invite the attention of the authorities. This point being conceded, who should take the initiative? There was a general disinclination to commence the remarkable depositions which would have to be made, before any action could be taken having reference to a charge of murder. After much discussion, it was resolved to leave matters as they were, for at least one day; thus affording an opportunity of ascertaining, through Harper, what effect, if any, the removal of Mournivale Stone-Eyes had wrought upon the household.

On the evening of the succeeding day the steward attended, as had been agreed, at Mr. Tincture's lodgings; Mr. Harlbutt and his nephew, Mr. Fanshawe (a neighbouring magistrate), and myself, being also present.

The statement Harper had to make rendered the mystery still more profound and complex than before. The preceding day had, to all appearance, been one of jubilee at Mournivale. Sir George Corsellis had gone out riding in the forenoon, actually accompanied by his lady, who was mounted on a beautiful Spanish jennet, lately arrived in Sir George's stables. The groom who attended them reported that they had paid more than one visit to distant country residences, galloping across the country, laughing like children, and apparently in the very highest glee. Her ladyship was still veiled, but she had spoken to each and all of the domestics in the course of the day, making them some presents, and ordering that they should have a little feast, to celebrate, as she said, the most joyous event in her existence.

Of Mournivale Stone-Eyes not one word was said. It would seem, however, that her terrible mysterious influence was no longer an object of dread. The servants went where they pleased about the mansion. Harper himself—in company with Eisa the Creole, and two or three of the other domestics, who were ordered to rearrange some furniture in the upper rooms—had visited almost every apartment in the house, without detecting any trace of her occupancy. Stone-Eyes was unquestionably gone! But, *whither?*

Before the council broke up, it was settled that Squire Harlbutt and Mr. Fanshawe should, next morning, wait upon the proprietor of Mournivale, and commence operations by referring to the subject of the poisoned tart: the agency of poison being, in Mr. Harlbutt's mind, inseparably associated with the midnight scene we had witnessed.

CHAPTER VI.

The countenance of the big Dutch porter exhibited as much surprise as its natural construction permitted, when the two magistrates requested, in tones slightly peremptory, an audience of his master.

After a moment's delay, they were invited to enter, and conducted to a magnificent library, in which sat Sir George, alone. That gentleman received them with frigid politeness, and so manifestly looked for an immediate explanation of their visit, that Mr. Harlbutt at once plunged into the matter.

Sir George raised his bushy eyebrows with apparently unfeigned astonishment, but made no remark.

"We are desirous, sir, of obtaining from you, if willing to afford it, authority to contradict in your name certain strange rumours afloat in the neighbourhood respecting——"

"Well, gentlemen, 'respecting'——?"

"Respecting," resumed Mr. Harlbutt, coolly putting on his spectacles, in order to scan the general's face more minutely, "the disappearance of a member of your household!"

Corsellis gave a slight start. Seated with his back to the light, it was not easy to detect any change of countenance. It was clear, however, that he was agitated.

"Allow me to remind you, Sir George," said Mr. Fanshawe, "that we do not wish to press upon you any question you are indisposed to answer; but permit me to ask you, is the use of deadly poisons permitted in your family?"

"*Poisons*, sir!" repeated Corsellis, grasping the arms of his chair, as though about to rise, but only leaning forward. "Explain yourself. Are you aware of what you are saying?"

"Perfectly. You have a domestic in your service, Sir George, called 'Morgan le Fay.'"

"The cook. And then?"

"Will you allow me to ask her a single question?"

Corsellis, for reply, put his lips to a voice-conductor in the wall:

"Send Morgan here."

A minute of profound silence followed. Then Morgan le Fay appeared at the door, fresh and rosy, curtseying, and smoothing the snow-white apron that rather adorned than concealed her plump and portly form. Sir George pointed to her, looking at his visitors interrogatively.

"We are desirous to ask you one question, my good woman," said Mr. Harlbutt. "My friend and myself are magistrates. Don't agitate yourself, I beg. It is simply this; a poisoned ap——Good Heavens! She has fainted!"

Morgan le Fay had swooned, and that so suddenly that Mr. Fanshawe, who was nearest, barely caught her as she reached the ground. Sir George rang for assistance. Some of the maids arrived, and the woman recovered.

"I—I knew it would come. God help us!" gasped the poor creature, as she was borne away.

A gloomy silence followed this scene. It was broken by Sir George himself.

"Well, gentlemen; as I presume the throwing my cook into a fit was not the whole object of your visit, in what may I satisfy you further?"

"I will tell you, Sir George Corsellis," said old Harlbutt. "It has been openly affirmed, in the neighbourhood, that an individual known to have been, ever since your arrival, resident in your household, has suddenly disappeared, under circumstances which warrant suspicion—only suspicion, understand—of poison. When I mentioned this disappearance, a few minutes ago, you started. When I spoke of poison in the presence of your servant, she fainted. And her first words, on recovering, might easily bear a construction most unfavourable to innocence."

He paused. Sir George looked at him for a moment, as though in meditation. Then he replied:

"There is truth in what you say. Gentlemen, I will not conceal from you that I desire to close this interview as speedily as courtesy permits. In what way can I satisfy the extraordinary suspicions to which you have apparently lent yourselves? By the way, to which member of my household do they point? To my wife?"

"No, Sir George. To the lady who is supposed *not* to bear your name."

"Miss Blatchford. Well, gentlemen, be pleased to follow me."

They passed up the wide staircase, and through a portion of the house, until their conductor stopped at a door which, softly opening at his touch, admitted them to a kind of veiled gallery, like an orchestra, from which they could observe, unseen, the interior of one of the rich saloons.

Two young ladies were there; one, engaged in some delicate work that looked like a bride-veil for a fairy; the other, reading aloud.

"Lady Corsellis, Miss Blatchford," said Corsellis, in a subdued tone, pointing to them in the order in which they have been mentioned.

Squire Harlbutt almost started at the beauty he saw before him. Desirée Lady Corsellis (born de Ahna) was a woman almost too fair to live. It seemed impossible that a being so perfect in loveliness, so delicately touched and retouched—as if Nature had for once resolved upon a masterpiece—should be subject to the common needs and ills of poor mortality. A brightness radiated from her, almost pleading indulgence for the ever-recurring fancy that something more than human resided in the shape called Lady Corsellis.

Of Miss Blatchford I will only say that, if fairies are ever dark, she might have been their queen. Small and slender as a child, the perfect symmetry of her proportions, and the easy finished grace of every movement, proved that she was, in all respects save stature, as near the perfection of womanhood as the most fastidious critic could desire.

Sir George allowed his visitors two minutes to contemplate the lovely picture before them, then once more led the way down stairs. At the door of the library he paused, as though expecting his visitors to take their leave. But a word whispered in Mr. Harlbutt's ear by his colleague, as they came down stairs, had determined the half-satisfied squire to go through with the matter.

"*A substitute?*" Mr. Fanshawe had suggested, pointing up-stairs.

"That there may be no further intrusions on your privacy, Sir George," resumed Mr. Harlbutt, "will you frankly permit Mr. Fanshawe and myself to visit that portion of your premises indicated by the village gossips as the place of burial of—of the—the supposed victim?"

The colour mounted to Corsellis's brow. He clutched the table against which he was standing, manifestly struggling hard to preserve an unruffled demeanour.

"Believe me, sir, nothing short of this will completely refute the scandal. But you will act as you please," added the old gentleman, as he took up his hat.

Sir George made one turn in the apartment, as if meditating on the course he should adopt; then he replied:

"Be it so, gentlemen. I was as little aware of the interest my proceedings were creating, as of the vigilant watch kept upon me. My unhappy secret is about to be disclosed, and since it is useless to cast any obstacles in the way of that investigation in which your duty, I suppose, alone compels you to persevere, I will myself aid in the discovery."

He rang the bell. It was answered by Troek, the porter.

"Send three of the garden people with spades to the rear of the cedar-copse."

Signing to the magistrates to follow, Corsellis passed into the garden, and, thence, by a small door into the outer grounds. The gardeners arriving at the same instant, Corsellis led the party directly to the scene of the midnight burial. Pointing to the spot where the fresh-turned soil indicated the grave, he ordered his men to dig.

A hole was quickly made. Fast flew the loose black mould to the surface. Presently, one of the labourers held up his hand.

"There is something here," he said.

"Well, man, up with it. Why do you stop?" exclaimed Corsellis, impatiently stamping his foot.

The men carefully uncovered the buried "something," and handed to the surface the carcase of an animal of the canine family, but with a shaggy mane and crest, something resembling those of a lion. Even in death, there was something curiously fierce and repulsive in the aspect of the hybrid beast. It had been stabbed with some broad keen blade, absolutely through and through.

"Gentlemen, are you content?" asked Corsellis, pointing at the animal as it lay at his feet. "This dog-lion acknowledged but two masters in the world—myself, and my servant Morgan. He became dangerous. We tried to poison him in vain. I killed him with my Malay creese, and here's his carcase. What more?"

"But, what *below* him, sir?" said old Harlbutt.

Corsellis bit his lip. His eye glared upon the speaker with a gleam hardly less ferocious than that of his own dog-lion, when alive; he looked round upon the circle; then, in a fury, burst out:

"Dig, dig, fellows, and have done with it! Cast out, cast out! Quick, now! That's well!"

A spade had rested upon something else than mould. The earth was rapidly cleared away, and exposed the folds of a shroud.

"Lift her carefully, fellows," said Corsellis, with a sort of fierce laugh. "Soft, now, soft! Do not expose those delicate limbs. Remember, though dead, she is a woman. Now, altogether. There!"

The stiffened frame was laid upon the grass close at hand. Then Sir George, taking the shroud in his two hands, rent it from top to bottom, and threw the pieces apart. It was an artist's lay-figure. On the face appeared a hideous mask, with white stony eyes, so constructed as to pass round and round: showing the face in any direction, as though the neck were invertebrated.

"There, gentlemen, is the whole secret," said Sir George, "since you will be content with nothing less. And here," he added, in a tone suddenly changed to one of the deepest feeling, "here is the key to the mysteries of Mournivale. My darling wife was—thank God I may now so express it—*mad*. Gentlemen, I was assured by a foreign physician, whose life has been passed in the study of brain disease, that if I would fearlessly and minutely follow the directions he would give me, as adapted to my wife's peculiar case, there was every hope, nay, almost certainty, of ultimate restoration. A portion of his system involved an absolute indulgence of the delusion under which she laboured. Her delusion was, that she had passed into the custody of a fiend, in whose fiery palace she was condemned to pass two hours nightly, amidst the noise and riot of fearful beings who were invisible to her. For months this hallucination was humoured. At length, certain symptoms which were from time to time carefully reported to the professor, induced him to authorise a daring experiment. *We resolved to kill the fiend.* It was done; we not only killed, but the more deeply to impress the supposed occurrence on my poor patient's mind, *buried*, her persecutor with all the pageant that the resources of my establishment could supply, sacrificing at the same time my poor Lion, on whose temper I could no longer depend.

"As touching the poison, Mr. Harlbutt," continued Sir George, "I conclude that my cook's consternation arose from the fear that some apple-tart intended for the destruction of Lion, had been productive of mischief elsewhere—a circumstance I should deeply deplore. At all events, I know that the poisoned dish was missing, and that its disappearance created no small anxiety. When I add that our own viands were occasionally seasoned with homœopathic preparations, I think I have touched upon everything you could desire to know. If not, give me the pleasure of your company on any future day, and I will complete my explanations, as well as make you known to my wife, and her nurse, friend, and cousin in one—our ex-demon—Miss Blatchford."

Sir George and his lady resided here for two years—mixing frequently with society, everywhere popular and welcome guests. When, at the end of that time, Miss Blatchford married Captain—then Colonel—Harlbutt, Sir George and his wife went to Italy, and continued, I believe, to reside there, until the death of both—on the same day—at Florence.

Here comes our engine! If my little story has beguiled the interval, I am sufficiently rewarded.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. EXIT FRANCIS BLUNT, ESQUIRE.

GOOD papa—it is useless to trouble you with his surname: you would forget it; you have so many names to think of; he appears but for a moment on the stage, and it is sufficient, surely, that he was little Amanda's father, and the guardian of the Edifice on the banks of the Seine—good papa, who was lank and slim, quite of the old school, and whose scanty hair was not innocent of a slight suspicion of powder, sat down with Monsieur Philibert to breakfast. The mightier beefsteak, the more succulent omelette, the stronger red wine, were placed before them. They were helped bountifully, and they ate plentifully. Philibert especially, enjoyed the good things of this life with a gusto which, to the spectator, was well-nigh ravishing. The meat and drink seemed to do him so much good. He a vampire! He a ghoul! He a croque mort! He seemed a plump-legged and abdominous cherub rather, in spotless linen and a massive watch-chain, feeding on ambrosia, which, as corpulent cherubs must eat, had been solidified for his especial use and benefit. He was a charming man, and talked as charmingly as he refected himself generously.

"Full, good papa?" he asked, when he had made an end of filling and emptying his own mouth.

"Empty as the mouth of a cannon at the Invalides, when there are no victories to fire salutes for," replied the guardian. "Everything is as bare, là-bas, as the palm of my hand. The Hôtel des Trépassés has not had a lodger for three days."

"Hôtel des Trépassés—good, very good," murmured Philibert. "You have a pleasant wit, good papa: a right pleasant wit. A little more Beaune, if you please. Thank you. It makes one quite chirrup, that little red wine. But business is usually slack at this time of the year, is it not so, papa? In the lively month of June, your heart-broken grisette does not think of charcoal, and hates the sight of a brazier: it is so warm. And then your bankrupt student, your discontented Faust. He is not quite so ready to have done with the great problem when the schools are about breaking up, and he is going home for the holidays."

"Ma foi! I'm sure I don't know. The seasons don't make so very much difference to us. Bon an, mal an, we have always a fair average of lodgers, winter and summer. It is only the English who make of November a special month for the settlement of their little accounts with Fate."

"Ah! those English. A strange, perverse, intractable race. Hopelessly eccentric are those sons of Albion. They tell me there is no Administration of the Pompes Funèbres in that brumous country, and that their proud and phlegmatic aristocracy, carrying their hereditary spleen even beyond the tomb, have lately taken it into their heads to be buried without the slightest state or ceremony. The morose insularies! Still, do I hear that Monsieur Thiers is making Milord Palmerston listen to reason as to the grand affair—the rendition of the sacred ashes of the Emperor."

"You are growing cracked with your emperor and his sacred ashes, mon gros," the guardian, with good-humoured petulance, observed. "You ask me one question, and then you fly off at a tangent to that eternal St. Helena. It is disrespectful to the Order of Things. It is flying in the face of the dynasty of July."

"Pardon, good papa. Patriotism is, I trust, not incompatible with veneration for the great deeds of times past, and for him the immortal hero. But you were saying——"

"I was saying that between November and June no very great disparity in the number of my lodgers was perceptible. With commendable regularity they continue to patronise the hôtel pretty well all the year round. Our present emptiness, for example, is almost unprecedented. People must be very happy, or the world very peaceable, or the Chapter of Accidents well-nigh exhausted, to account for it."

"It is certainly curious."

"It is more than curious, it is vexatious," good papa, rubbing his ear with some irritation, resumed. "Our usual sources of supply seem to have failed us lately. It is June, certainly, but then don't people go down to St. Cloud, spend their employers' money in reckless dissipation, and cut their throats through remorse next morning? Don't young men hire boats at Asnières in a state of inebriety, capsize their

embarkations in a tipsy attempt to row, and get drowned? Are there no lovers' quarrels at Fontenay-aux-Roses, resulting in the customary laudanum, or the usual and inexpensive branch of a tree? Where is our midsummer harvest from the Bois de Vincennes? Where are our returns from the Forêt de Fontainebleau? And the Palais Royal, and Frascati's—what has become of them? Have half the world been betting on the black, and the other half on the red, and have both red and black turned up alternately, so that both have won? It is incomprehensible. And the assassinations? Is the Cité pulled down? Are there no more bandits in the Rue aux Fèves, no more liberated convicts on the Quai de Billy, no more night-prowlers at the outer barriers? And misery! misery that always exists, that always brings its quota of lodgers to the hôtel. Ma parole d'honneur, je n'y vois guère."

And so the gossips went on. The womenfolk had withdrawn to a window, and, softly chatting among themselves, were watching the ever-changing panorama on the river shores beneath. Philibert was telling the guardian, of a grand funeral which took place in the reign of Louis the Eighteenth—a funeral on a raw, cold November day—a day so cold, so raw, that three personages, eminent in French history, standing round the open grave, caught cold, and caught their deaths, too; for they all expired in less than three months afterwards.

"Let me see," prattled Philibert, counting on his fingers; "there was Monsieur Marchangy, he whom Béranger—what a funeral the great poet will have!—castigated so mercilessly dans le temps, ever so long ago. Then there was that distinguished ornament to the bar, Monsieur Robert de Saint-Vincent. And, finally, there was Brillat-Savarin—Savarin the unequalled, the incomparable, the illustrious gastronomical philosopher who——"

"A-a-h!" Lily gave a little scream and ran back, trembling like a frightened fawn, from the window. Amanda followed her, and caught her hand to calm her. Amanda was disturbed by her friend's agitation, but she was not terrified. She had looked from that window too often and too long. Madame Thomas remained immovable: her nose glued, seemingly, to the pane.

"What is it, my child?" cried the guardian, starting up in some alarm.

"What is it, Ma'amselle Amanda?" the master of the ceremonies echoed. "Perhaps," he continued, mentally, "my eloquence has touched the sympathies of la petite Anglaise. They are very sentimental, these charming misses. Would that the effect the humble Philibert may have made upon her would react on the stony heart of Amanda. Oh! my Amanda, my Amandine!" Monsieur Philibert, be it remembered, was a widower, and more than middle-aged; but he had not yet abandoned all hopes of forming a second matrimonial alliance. A pretty, amiable, well-to-do partner, able to conduct during his absence on official business a genteel mourning establishment, a maison de deuil, on the Boulevard des Capucines: this was his dream of bliss.

"It is nothing, it is nothing, papa," Amanda hastened to reply to her father's query; "or, rather, it is a mere trifle, a bagatelle; but Ma'amselle Lily is not used to such sights, and it has frightened her. It is your affair. C'est quelqu'un qu'on porte ici—it is SOMEBODY who is coming, my papa."

Lily had sunk into a chair, and had covered her face with her hands, and was sobbing without tears. The poor little thing was too frightened to cry.

"Is it gone?" she asked, as Amanda bent over her to soothe her.

"You silly little soul, there is nothing to be alarmed at. I live in the midst of such things, and they never trouble me. Papa takes care of all that sort of thing."

Madame Thomas, with her nose to the pane, gave a low prolonged sound, like "haough." Madame Thomas was keen scented; she sniffed the lodger from afar off.

The two men went up, and stood beside her. And then they beheld, beneath them, that of which Lily had caught but a distant glimpse.

First, there was a crowd. Two soldiers, recently conscripted, who had just joined the garrison of Paris, with gaby faces, ill-cut hair, forage-caps yet void of the military manner of setting on, and an inch of shirt visible between the hems of their jackets and the waistbands of their pantaloons. One was munching an apple, and the other was smoking a halfpenny cigar, of course. To them followed a water-carrier, and a cook with her basket full of greenstuff, who had just partaken of a morning sip with the Aquarius aforesaid; a flock of ragged boys in blouses, coming home from a primary school, who were swinging their satchels, and shrilly interchanging criticisms upon Somebody's appearance and odour—especially upon his odour; half a dozen workmen, with pipes in their mouths; and an old gentleman with a straw hat, spectacles, and a blue gingham umbrella, who may have been a member of the Institute, a retired banker, a spy of the police, or a begging-letter writer taking an airing, but who, with his hat, his spectacles, and his umbrella, had formed an integral portion of similar crowds any time these fifty years: at the Federal Pact ceremonial in the Champ de Mars, at the Feast of the Goddess of Reason, at the whipping of Théroigne de Mircourt, at the execution of Robespierre, at the cannonade of the Eighteenth Brumaire, at the explosion of the first Infernal Machine, at the Coronation of Napoleon, at the entry of the Allies into Paris in 'fourteen, at the Champ de Mai in 'fifteen, at the removal of the Horses of St. Mark from the Arch of the Carrousel, at the assassination of the Duke of Berry, at the barricades of July, at the Hôtel de Ville when Jacques Lafayette showed the Duke of Orleans to the mob as "the best of republics," at the riots during the cholera year 'thirty-three, at the funeral of General Lamarque, and the bloody conflict in the Rue de la Tixeranderie, at the raising

of the Obelisk of the Luxor, and the interment of the patriots of July beneath the Column of the Place de la Bastille. He had made one in all these famous crowds, this tranquil old man in the straw hat, and he always had a book under his arm, just purchased for seventy-five centimes on the Quai Voltaire. He had seemingly never changed save in the article of a pigtail, which he wore during the Republic and the Empire, and had cut off soon after the Second Restoration.

This was the crowd. Stay: the gentleman who shaved poodles, and attended to cats on the Pont Neuf, had left his stall in the care of an old woman, and run up just to see what was going on. His temporary absence from duty was perhaps explanatory of that "Va en ville" which, on his signboards, have in our time often mystified us. Stay, once more. Two or three sergents de ville, their swords drawn, kept close to the object which was the nucleus of the throng, and had drawn it together. Finally, in the rear of the procession—for it was a mobile crowd, and in penny-a-lining diction might have been called a cortége—there followed leisurely three well-dressed men, who had breakfasted together that morning, and, taking a walk afterwards for recreation, had fallen in with something of the nature of a spectacle, or show, and were determined to follow it to the end.

That end was now near. It was the door of the Edifice. Philibert drew up the window, and could look right down upon the Something that was being borne along in the midst of the gazers and the schoolboy critics. Four men of the water-side order—an order which differs very slightly from one end of the world to the other—were carrying, by means of straps yoked over their brawny shoulders, a kind of stretcher or bier. On it, lay Something about six feet long. It was entirely covered with some coarse sacking, from which, as it swayed along, water dripped pretty freely on the sunny June pavement. A moment's glance at this Something beneath the sacking was sufficient to tell you that what lay there had been human, and was dead.

"A lodger at last," quoth the guardian, quietly. "I must go down and see to his toilette. Will you be one of us, mon gros? Amanda, my angel, thou wilt amuse Ma'mselle Lily until I return."

Madame Thomas would have dearly liked to join the party bound for the basement, but lacking an invitation, was forced to content herself with assisting in the consolation of Lily.

The task was not a very difficult one. The girl soon forgot the ugly object whose real import she had by intuition guessed. Then Amanda played and sang to her again; and, what with the warbling of the birds and the lively prattle of her companions, she soon grew comparatively cheerful.

Not so cheerful, perhaps, as those below who were making the lodger's toilette, and whistling over their task.

It was a paradoxical toilette, for, in order to dress him, they undressed him, and left him stark. Although he had had lately a great deal more water than was good for him—the excess of fluid had indeed been a proximate cause of his decease—they had no sooner gotten him on to his bed of rest, than they set more water to trickle over him. It is true that to keep him sweet, they mingled some chloride of lime with the water. He had need to be kept sweet, this lodger, for he was drowned as well as dead.

The crowd, who had been excluded from the Edifice for half an hour after the admission of the lodger with his bearers, and who had grown as impatient as any other crowd—say that waiting for admission to the pit of a theatre—would under similar circumstances: the crowd had at last ingress allowed it. The sight-seers poured in and saw the show. They came straggling out by twos and threes soon afterwards. Their criticisms on the spectacle were various. The cook said that he must have been a fine-looking man—bel homme; the schoolboys were of course delighted. One of the soldiers when he came out was sick. He said that it was the cigar which made him feel unwell. The audience were in the main agreed that the dead man had not been in the Seine many hours; that he had been legitimately drowned and not murdered—notwithstanding an ugly gash on his right shoulder: which the connoisseurs averred had been done with the boat-hook with which he had been fished up; and that he was a foreigner.

Of the three well-dressed men who had followed the crowd at their leisure, only one had at first entered the Edifice. It was Jean Baptiste Constant.

Rataplan had flatly refused to go in. He had no taste for such horrors, he said.

Franz Stimm promised to enter, on receiving a report from Constant as to the appearance of the dead. "I likes a ansom gorps," said the courier. "It is schrecklich schön, muy grazioso; but ven he is vets and vounds, and zmells bad, he makes mine stomjacks veel queer."

So J. B. Constant went in alone.

He rushed out a minute afterwards with a livid face.

"Come in, both of you!" he cried. "As I live, I have found him—my old master—the child's father—Mr. Blunt!"

Francis Blunt, Esquire, stiff and stark, his soaked and shabby clothes hanging on a peg behind him, lay, indeed, on a cold slab in the Morgue of Paris.

So there is death in life, and life in death; and the daughter was alive above, while the father was dead below; and both should reck nothing of their meeting or their parting, till all meet to part no more.

CHAPTER XXXIX. LILY RUNS AWAY.

There was no other way out of it. She loved, wholly and to desperation, and her love was hopeless. She felt that she must either die or go. She was too young, too pure to think of killing herself. Of hard and bitter trials the

poor child had surely had enough in her short and troublous career, and over and over again she had fancied that she was weary of life, and would be glad to be quit of it, for good and all, and at rest. But there is a thing called hope, the which, although we pretend or imagine ourselves to be sunk in irremediable despair, is still latent in the human breast. Although the bed of the stream may be dry in the parched and arid season, the mountain springs are never choked, and in time the old channel will be flooded, and the river will rise and reach the ocean. Although she suffered and wept very sorely, within her was still that elasticity and rebounding power which, under heaven, might give her strength to endure anguish more terrible than any she had yet felt. Hope is never dead until the mind is utterly unable to suggest an alternative. Then you go mad and slay yourself.

Her passion, it became sadly evident, was known to, or at least vehemently suspected, by Madame de Kergolay. By degrees the affectionate kindness with which the good old lady was wont to treat her protégée dwindled down to a cold and ceremonious tolerance of her presence. She was addressed as "Mademoiselle," and as "you," instead of "little darling," "little angel," a hundred other terms of endearment, and "thou." If she were absent for an hour no inquiries were made as to where she had been. Soon she was allowed to remain in her chamber for half a day together, unasked for and unnoticed. Complete and contemptuous indifference on the part of her patroness seemed to set in. She was asked to perform no little tasks, to move no cushions, to give her opinion on no needlework. Her own growing proficiency in the accomplishments which had been taught her elicited no admiration from her for whose praise Lily fondly looked, and, until lately, had looked alone.

One day—it was the first for a very long time—the old lady sent for her, and in acid and querulous tones gave her that which women, among themselves, call "a good talking to," that which was half a reprimand and half an attempt to extort a confession. Madame de Kergolay made no direct accusation against Lily, but her doubts, her inuendoes, her denunciations of an implied ingratitude, heartlessness, and hypocrisy, were a hundred times more painful to the girl than if she had brought a specific indictment against her, and charged her with the commission of deliberate crime. She told her how mortifying it was for the aged to find their efforts on behalf of the young requited by treachery and deceit. She delivered cutting apophthegms on the ease with which young persons thought they could delude and hoodwink their elders; she delivered sardonic apologues as to certain vipers which had been warmed in compassionate bosoms, and how much sharper than a serpent's tooth it was to have a thankless child, even when it happened that the child in question was an adopted one. And a good deal more did she expatiate on the reverence and loyalty that were due from inferiors towards those who, although they might have been deprived by Providence in its wisdom of their worldly possessions, were still immeasurably and irrevocably above them.

A dozen times during this harangue was Lily on the point of casting herself at the old lady's feet, of clinging to her dress, of embracing her, of avowing her love, of admitting that it was rash, mad, wicked, unreciprocated, of adjuring her by the memory of all the loving kindness she had hitherto experienced, to forgive her and to bless her, and to permit her to retire from her presence and her house, to pray for her benefactress, no longer petted and fondled by her, but still unreproved and undiscarded. This was not to be. So soon as words of admission began to quiver on Lily's lips, the old lady would tell her, with freezing dignity, that she had no wish to pry into her secrets, that she doubtless knew her own affairs best, that she must be the best judge under the circumstances as to what was due to society, to those who had befriended her, and to herself; that she would not presume to offer any counsel to so high and mighty a personage as Mademoiselle, whom she had then the honour to address: and that, after all, she must know a great deal more about the world and its ways than those who were three, if not four times her age. "You belong to a rising and precocious generation, Mademoiselle," the ancient dame concluded, with bitter and condescending irony; "to a generation which has made up its mind to outrage and to insult all that persons of maturer age deem worthy of preservation and respect: to a generation which has cast such bagatelles as truth, gratitude, honesty, and maidenly modesty to the four winds of heaven. Allez! I am not deceived. I am only a little disappointed. I have only lost another of the few and most fondly cherished illusions which remained between me and my grave."

Lily saw that in her present temper it was useless to argue with one who, rightly or wrongly, had evidently a preconceived prejudice against her, and that one of the strongest nature. In very humble and submissive accents she asked, as she was Quite Alone and friendless, what were madame's intentions towards her as regarded the future. "I don't know much," added Lily, plaintively; "but if madame thinks me strong enough, I am ready to go out as a governess." Herein Lily indulged in a vague reminiscence of the Pension Marcassin, and of the mission to which, according to Miss Marygold, all young girls who had the misfortune to be educated and poor were doomed.

"Ma foi," responded Madame de Kergolay, shrugging her shoulders, half in indifference and half in embarrassment, "I scarcely know. I suppose I must speak to cet abbé malencontreux, that inopportune ecclesiastic who brought you here. Yes; I must speak to him; et puis on verra. As for assuming the functions of a governess at your immature age—ne vous en déplaise pas le mot—and with the crude and im-

perfect, if not vicious, education you have already acquired, the idea strikes me as being utterly preposterous and absurd. Nor, although I do not doubt your great quickness and aptitude for learning anything to which you choose to apply your mind, do I think you at all qualified, with your previous irregular training, to instil sentiments of piety and morality into the young."

Everything and everybody was seemingly against our unhappy Lily. "What, then, do you wish me to do, madame?" she continued, in a subdued tone.

"I repeat, we shall see. Something may turn up. Were you of a different creed, or were your mind differently constituted, it might be expedient for a young and destitute person for whom generous individuals were willing to make a small dotation, to take the vows and seek the retirement of a convent; the dames of St. Vincent de Paul would be happy to receive any novice of my recommendation for a sum of three thousand francs once paid. But, to speak frankly, I should hesitate to consign to a cloister a young lady possessing so very sprightly a disposition."

"I can sew, I can be a servant," urged poor Lily, dolorously.

"Et faire la cuisine par-dessus le marché, et faire danser l'anse du panier," Madame de Kergolay, with grim sarcasm, went on. "O, I have very little doubt of the variety of your talents, even for domestic service. You would make an admirable soubrette in one of M. de Marivaux's comedies—one of those astute chambermaids who are the life and soul of an intrigue, and are not indisposed occasionally to a little flirtation with M. le Marquis."

Poor Lily began to sob as though her heart would break. She felt, in all intensity, the contempt and dislike expressed in these words. She felt that she was being treated with cruelty and injustice, but she had not the courage indignantly to justify herself.

Madame de Kergolay seemed more wearied than touched by the girl's grief. "There," she said, waving her hand as Lily's sobs grew more passionate, "we can dispense with these miaulements. M. de Buffon has told us all about crocodiles and their tears. I am too nervous, and too much of an invalid, to be able to support any scenes. I shall be obliged to you to give me no theatrical tirades, and to leave the room."

Burying her face in her handkerchief, and endeavouring, but in vain, to suppress her sobs, Lily obeyed the command, and turned to go.

"You will not, if you please, approach me again," continued the inexorable old lady, "until you are sent for. Your presence, in sight of recent events, is productive of anything but pleasurable sensations. M. l'Abbé and I will confer as to your future, and in due time you will be made acquainted with our decision. Your meals will be served to you in your own chamber. Justice and consideration—much more than you have been willing to extend to others—will be dealt out to you. Affection and indulgence you can no longer expect. Go, misguided child."

Lily's trembling hand was on the lock of the door, her foot was on the threshold to depart, when she heard once more the old lady's voice.

"One moment. Let me give you a word of counsel. Any little arrangements you may have made for carrying on a most culpable intrigue have been frustrated. M. Edgar Greyfaunt has left for England."

It was the first time, in all her reproachful speeches, that she had mentioned her grand-nephew's name. It was the first time that she had directly made allusion to any connexion between Edgar and the cause of her anger. The hint was quite enough for Lily.

She went forth from the presence of the kind heart which had melted for her, a poor, destitute, friendless stranger, and which now seemed turned to marble. What had she done? Ah! her heart told her too well, and with damning precision. She had dared to love. She had presumed to look up from her lowly station to the patrician kinsman of her benefactress. The eagle may look at the sun, but not the worm. Her upturned gaze had been met by a withering frown. She had been stricken down and trampled under foot. It was all over now. She was discovered, detected, degraded. Madame de Kergolay regarded her as a monster of ingratitude. The abbé would but reflect his patroness's opinion. The very servants would look askance upon her as one proscribed and in disgrace. And Edgar? Edgar, ah misery! was gone.

There was nothing left for her but to go too. Whither she knew not. She had but a few francs in her pocket; she dared not take with her any considerable portion of her wardrobe; besides, it was supplied to her by Madame de Kergolay, and was not hers to take. She had no friends; none, at least, to whom she would dare to appeal in her extremity. Amanda at the Morgue was barely an acquaintance. She dared not go to that dreadful place again. There was, it was true, the Pension Marcassin. Should she go there, confront the ogress in black velvet who had made her girlhood miserable, and entreat her, even on her knees, to take her back again, were it even as a common drudge to sweep and scrub the class-rooms out? But how would the ogress receive her? Would she not spurn her, or at best dismiss her with derision? And then, was not the abbé in constant communication with the Marcassin, and would not her retreat be known? She wanted to go away somewhere and hide her head. She wanted to be heard of no more by those who once loved her, but now looked upon her with aversion and disdain. She wanted to be Quite Alone.

If she could only find the Marygold! But where was she to seek for her, and what assistance could she expect from her even if she found her? No, she would go to England, she thought. It would not cost much to reach England. She would ask where Stockwell was, and endeavour to find out the Bunnycastles. She would seek for Cutwig and Co.; nay, with a

kind of blush she thought that she might meet the tall gentleman who had met her at the Greenwich dinner when she was a child, and had been kind to her.

But what if she should fall into the hands of the strange and imperious lady who had brought her from beyond the sea! Well, she had borne that before, and might bear it again. It could scarcely be worse than the misery she was now enduring.

To England, then. But how? She was as ignorant of the means by which the desired land was to be reached as any child of five years old could be, nor did she venture to ask any one around her for information. She knew nothing of the formalities requisite to procure a passport even for inland travelling, or how she was to reach the coast, or get on board ship. She would ask, she thought, when she had taken to flight, and was beyond pursuit. Pursuit! Would any one deem it worth his while to pursue so forlorn and deserted a little maiden as she was? At all events, she would seek her way, and, if necessary, beg it. Perhaps it would end in her dying of hunger and cold like the Children in the Wood; and where were the Robin Redbreasts who would cover her with leaves?

Nineteen francs and seventeen centimes: that was the sum total of her resources: the residue of Madame de Kergolay's last gift of pocket-money. How sorry she was, now, that she had bought those little lawn cuffs and kerchief at "Le Chat qui pelote" in the Rue St. Denis. But she was happy then, and had not been scolded —ah! so cruelly—and did not dream of running away. Was her contemplated flight wrong? Ay, surely it was; both wicked and self-willed, and hard-hearted, and ungrateful. But what was she to do? Who was to advise, to censure, to dissuade her? She had no friends, and she was Quite Alone.

Stay! She had a golden locket which Madame de Kergolay had given her. It was encircled, too, with small diamonds, and contained a lock of hair of the Martyr King—of Louis the Sixteenth. She would be obliged to sell that if her money were insufficient to take her to England. There were plenty of shops on the quays, where they advertised in the windows to buy old gold, and silver, and diamonds, in any quantity and at good prices. Was it not base, mean, almost felonious, to sell the pretty trinket which she whom Lily loved best in the world had given her? Truly her conscience told her it was. But she had no hope, no means, save in the disposal of that locket. Perhaps the dealer would be merciful enough to keep it for her till she could earn enough money to buy it back again, and then she would return it to Madame de Kergolay. She tormented herself with all kinds of blundering sophistry, and, had she been a professed logician, she could not have arrived at last at more erroneous conclusions. At all events, the locket had been given to her. Was it not her own? She tried to persuade herself that it was. To a certain extent, it might have been; but never, surely, to use as a basis for running away. Well, God forgive her her naughtiness, she thought desperately. But she must sell the locket.

And why to England, since she knew that Edgar Greyfaunt had gone thither? Should not prudence, pride, that "maidenly modesty," her want of which the cruel Madame de Kergolay had taunted her with, deter her from following to a strange land the man she loved, but who could not care five centimes for her? Again sophistry came to her aid. She was not following him. England was a very large place. There was surely room enough there for two. Besides, had she not a right in England? Was she not of English birth? Had she not passed a portion of her childhood there? Might she not find friends in England? Friends! A fresh burst of sobs broke from her, as she remembered how utterly friendless and alone she was.

All this and much more she thought of on her way to the little bedroom where she had once been so happy. She had scarcely the heart to enter it again, or to open the casement and look out upon the housetop, and see the blue smoke wreathing upwards, and listen to the jangling piano, and the voice of Jules quarrelling with Seraphine his wife. She had nothing more to do with Paris. Its sights and sounds were to be henceforth estranged from her. For an hour or more she sat on the stairs outside her door, her face in her hands, her tears mingling with her thoughts, her sense of thorough loneliness and misery with both. And then she went into her chamber, and cast herself on the bed, and lay there thinking and sobbing till it was dark.

They brought her up some dinner in due season; but the ancient servitor, acting probably under instructions, only knocked at the door, and telling her in a harsh voice that her repast was served, left it there on a tray, and retired. He came up again in an hour's time, found that the viands had not been touched, and took the tray away again without a word.

"Let her starve herself if she chooses," the unbending old lady down stairs said, when the ancient servant, whose heart was bleeding, somehow, for Lily, represented these facts to his mistress. "It is a voluntary act on her part. She is not locked in. The food was placed at her door, and she was duly informed of its being there."

"But suppose mademoiselle becomes ill—falls into a languor—into syncope, in a word—madame would be very sorry."

"Madame would be nothing whatever of the kind," the old lady retorted, sharply. "Hold your tongue. You presume upon my indulgence, and the privilege of long service. Are you, too, about to turn on me—ungrateful?"

"Heaven forbid, madame."

"It would seem like it. As for her starving herself, or falling ill, there is no danger of that. I tell you, that it is only her temper. Mere sulkiness and obstinacy. This is the way with girls of the present generation. When I was at

the convent, if I had behaved so, the good sisters would have given me the discipline. There, let me hear no more of this ungrateful and designing serpent. She will be hungry enough to-morrow morning, I will warrant."

What dreadful crime had Lily committed that she could turn to such rancorous severity a nature which she had hitherto found soft, and yielding, and tender? Alas, her sin was unpardonable: it was the sin against pride and haughtiness. Madame de Kergolay could have excused her almost everything; but she could not forgive her for being human.

Lily scarcely slept a wink that night—the last she was resolved to pass in the place which had been a home, and a happy home to her. She did not undress, but lay on the bed, tossing and tumbling restlessly. She rose, so soon as it was daylight, almost in a fever. She was full of pulses. Her blood beat the drum in her temples, her eyes, her ears, her wrists, her very gums, and the root of her hot tongue. She drank a long draught of cold water, which only seemed to render her more thirsty, and laved her hands and face in the fluid which still failed to cool her. Looking at herself in the glass she was terrified to see how swollen and inflamed her eyes looked, how sunken were her cheeks, with a hectic spot on each bone. She wanted rest, consolation, nourishment, or bleeding, it might be; but she could stay for none of these. A hundred clanging voices kept shouting out to her that there was no other way but this, and that she must run away.

The wretched little woman had made up her mind to fly. With her childhood, her girlhood, she seemed to have done for ever. She was a grown-up Pariah and outcast now—an adult vagabond and wanderer upon the face of the earth. God help her; but there was no one else to render a hand of succour to her. She was afraid to put up any linen, any change of dress, or even so much as an additional shawl. She went forth in her usual walking-dress and simple bonnet, and nought else, save her beauty and her innocence—for though she was constrained to sell that locket she *was* innocent—to cover her.

But before she went away she knelt down, and prayed Heaven earnestly and tearfully to bless the woman—her and her household—who had had mercy upon her, a solitary and helpless wayfarer. She prayed for the good clergyman who had brought her hither, at once the cause of her great happiness and her greater sorrow. And, finally, she prayed to be forgiven the deed she was about to do.

Then she rose up, and hastily thrust beneath the wings of her bonnet the masses of soft brown hair she had been wont to arrange each morning with such dainty neatness. Then, sitting down at the little table where, with joy and contentment, she had been used to study, she penned a few hasty lines to Madame de Kergolay. She said that she would return no more, and that it was useless to seek for her; that she was not so wicked as to meditate suicide, and that she trusted in God to watch over and protect her. She confessed that she had been foolish, that she had been ungrateful, that she had been mad, in daring to love a certain person, but with passionate disclaimers she denied having been treacherous or hypocritical. And, finally, she implored Madame de Kergolay to forgive her, and to think of her not as she was, but as she had been.

It was a glorious summer morning, and the sun was literally pouring into the room, drenching every object with gold. Lily thought of that sunny morning she had sat on the carpet at Rhododendron House, and said "I won't," to Miss Barbara Bunnycastle. Ah! how long ago that was. She was quite a little child then, though so unhappy. And now she was a woman, and unhappier than ever.

Brighter shone the sun, promising a glorious day. It was the twenty-seventh of July.

THE POOR MAN HIS OWN MASTER.

The course of the poor-law of late years, judging by its circular letters and alterations, has been, on the whole, in favour of those who receive relief; so let us hope that in good time a reform may be carried out, which, while retaining everything serviceable, would rid the system of some faults. One fault is assuredly its action as an obstacle to the development of life assurance societies suited to the requirements of the farm labourer.

The principle that a person must be destitute before eligible for relief—although distress is comparative and often is most trying among thousands who are not destitute—is harsh and repugnant to the present social condition of the peasantry. The case was very different upwards of thirty years ago, when the poor-rate, though administered on a good principle, had been so flagrantly abused that it had become little better than supplementary to wages. One sees, however, a return to it with good results in the relief at present given in the cotton districts; and the efficient services of relieving-officers of districts give opportunity for gentler and more considerate treatment of the poor. In former days food was dear, and the farm labourer sullen discontented and mischievous, so that neither stack-yard nor machinery, then slowly establishing itself on the farm, was safe. The poor-law has not produced the great change we see, but is in its way a part of it. We have no wish to underrate the advantages of a system (though we have mortal quarrels with its administration sometimes) which scoured the country of many abuses, saved the ratepayers a great deal of money, and at the same time enabled the hungry, naked, and houseless to keep body and soul together, and sleep with a roof over them; though all was done with official austerity, and under conditions which made paupers and criminals wonderfully like each other, with a large balance to the credit of the jail-bird, in the matter of food, lodging, and dress. But times are again changed, and

the system which has done its work needs a change also. Machinery has altered the direction, not the need, of labour, and the peasantry are now proud of the implements which their fathers leagued together to destroy. The farm labourer is no longer morose and disaffected, but is proud to possess claims to a better social position than he hitherto has held. And if his class does not take its due position so soon as it ought, the difficulties which stand in the way demand careful consideration, with a view to their removal.

What is there in the nature of the farm labourer to make him an exception among men of other industrial classes? He, too, desires to better his condition, and has his ability for honest work. He loves his wife and children, and desires to see them safe from worldly harm. What is there in his occupation to make it impossible that he should become as independent in his sphere as the intelligent artisan or tradesman, who labours year after year till he grows old, retires from business, and supports his last days on the interest of the money which is to go to his wife and family when the time of his departure comes?

There is nothing either in the nature of the man or in his occupation to make his way an exception to the common way of men. But there are obstacles for which he is not responsible, by which he is discouraged from setting about his proper social work. Allow him the same stimulus which others feel, and we shall have him also, when prudent, turning all his opportunities to right account. Permit him to save something of his weekly earnings without adding to his struggle the mischievous condition that if ever pinched by poverty or sickness, his pound or two in the next post-office savings-bank will be in jeopardy ere he can touch the rate. Let him feel sure that the sickness and superannuation pay of country clubs are not a contrivance of the ratepayers for saving the rates; but at the same time add, as the necessary safeguard against poor-rate plunder, that he shall pay his fair proportion as a ratepayer himself, and thus be himself interested in seeing that the idle and dissolute poor no longer throw themselves at pleasure upon the union relief. Concede to him, if you will, the privilege which the ratepayers enjoy, as only Englishmen can, of a grievance in vestry or a poll for the parish officers. These qualifications will soon set the farm labourer in a different and, we think, a much better position. He will give up his notion that the poor-rate is in the nature of his rent-charge in lieu of part ownership in the clods of the valley among which he scatters or cuts the grain, his claim to which he must on no account imperil by self-help.

It is stated on authority that provident societies diminish the amount of the poor-rate annually to the extent of a couple of millions. In other words, about twenty-five per cent of the amount required to relieve distress is secured by the system of sick and burial clubs. In England, "one person in nine is a member of a benefit society of some kind or other; in France, one in seventy-six."

In a tranquil country, in which food is cheap, the labour market is improving, and the industrious people are contented, the system of provident societies will force its way against all obstacles. Adverse legislation may impede its growth, but the societies spread themselves over the whole country, although they have taken, in the case of the beer-house clubs, a misshapen and sickly form.

There are upwards of twenty thousand societies certified by Mr. Tidd Pratt, the registrar. The advantages secured by their certificates are principally that they are entitled to the benefit of the act relating to friendly societies, they can appoint responsible trustees, they can sue and be sued, and have the advantage of the experience and advice of the registrar, whose assistance is in great request, judging from the number of letters with which his last report is crammed. He can punish fraudulent officers in such societies; but it is no part of his duty, nor does it belong to the profession of which the registrar of friendly societies must be a member, to value liabilities and assets. The valuation of an insurance society is actuary's work. We may observe, then, in passing, how usefully direct legislation might help friendly societies if actuaries were joined to the registrar's staff. And, if the certificate were withheld in every society declared by the valuer insolvent beyond hope, much trouble and waste effort would be saved. The valuer would quickly disclose results of a kind not altogether looked for in certified societies whose tables have received the approval that the law requires.

But the certified societies are a small force compared with the "Brummagem" or "sharing-out clubs," which are under the sole sway of publicans. By their means a thriving trade is maintained for the beer-house. These cannot be judged by any common and ordinary rules hitherto applied. They must be taken, as intelligent farm labourers know very well, in relation to, and dependent upon, poor-rate relief.

The family likeness of these non-certified societies is tolerably uniform.

Large societies, such as the Manchester Unity, have "lodges" or "courts," as their branches are termed, in different parts of the country. Of these branches many are unsound, but they are, generally speaking, in a better state than the beer-house club, although in some respects resembling it closely. They have the advantage of advice and assistance from the chief officers of their central body. It is impossible to speak without praise, of the manner in which the duties of such persons are discharged. By their means an insolvent lodge obtains a skilled opinion of its position, fairly and impartially stated; the members are encouraged to look their difficulties in the face, and are, if they be retrievable, shown how to take measures to secure their position. The instances in which this advice has saved members from disaster are almost beyond number.

Of a Brummagem club this is the typical form. "The United Order" is a society which secures to the members provision during sickness at ten shillings a week full pay for three months, and in event of continued illness half-pay for a similar term; after which the sick member is "superannuated" on half-a-crown a week, payable so long as the club lasts. In case of death, the sum payable is six pounds. For all these benefits the farm-labourer pays sixpence a week, and an annual fee of one shilling. On the death of his wife, the members are bound to raise by a levy—the rate of which depends on the number in the society—the sum of four pounds. If he lose a child, there is a levy of two pounds.

All the members of the United Order pay alike. They avoid the difficulty, which is no small one to them, of different premiums graduated to different ages, by striking out, in a rough and ready manner, an average uniform rate of payment. This plan cannot produce insolvency so long as the average payment of all the members compared with their average age is high enough. If the average payment be too low for the average age, insolvency, for this reason alone, would follow. If it be too high, every penny of the surplus goes to secure solvency.

Neither does the injustice of the uniform payment seem so great in practice as it is in theory. Where all members enter, say, between the ages of twenty and thirty, the variation is but small in a graduated contribution, and if a simple plan be thus secured instead of a complex one, which even men who are not muddled by beer and tobacco have to think over before acting upon, the farm labourer gets cheaply to the end of his problem. As for the injustice done in electing two or three members, who, though twice the age of others, pay the same uniform rate, it is compensated, in the opinion of the United Order, by the graver services and better advice to be had from such men. To them, as a general rule, the young men leave the management—to them and to the landlord of the house at which they meet; until, the young men having come to know more than the old men, there is a disturbance, and the club is reformed with a fresh ministry to help the sovereign landlord.

Members of the United Order are admitted at the annual meeting on the first Monday in May. A verbal declaration is made by the proposer that to the best of his knowledge and belief the candidate is subject to no disease or disorder likely to throw him upon the funds. In a country town or village it is next to impossible to make such a declaration falsely, and escape immediate detection; but, should there be fraud in this matter, the member is cast out, and forfeits all that he has paid. Often, even in public-house clubs, a medical certificate, for which the usual payment is a shilling, is required instead of a verbal declaration. The landlord and two of the older and most respected men are joint treasurers. They have a box with three unlike locks, of one of which each man carries the key. It can therefore be open only when the treasurers meet. Money beyond a sum in hand necessary for outgoings is placed in their joint names in the nearest savings-bank, and the attention of savings-bank managers ought to be given to see that the non-certified societies can legally open an account with them. The United Order has, however, voted the investment of a large sum in a builder's speculation, with results we will not venture to anticipate. It holds a fortnightly "court," as it is termed, in the taproom of the Black Bear, at eight o'clock on Saturday night, on which occasions the "regalia" of the order are displayed, the strong-box is placed on the table and examined, and a verbal statement of accounts is rendered. Fines are then levied, and, by rule, "spent in beer." Every member is bound to attend, or be fined threepence for absence. One fine is, "If any member swears or utters a profane word during the time the court is open, he shall be fined sixpence for each offence. The money to be spent in the room." The check to one sort of excess is made the inducement to another.

Taking all payments into account, fines and necessary outlay for beer, the weekly rate, the occasional levy, the annual entrance fee, it is doubtful whether thirty-three shillings in any year clears the farm labourer of all claims from the club; thirty-five would be nearer the mark. For, besides the sixpence a week, and the annual shilling, his expenses are at least threepence for "the good of the house," if not in fine for absence at each fortnightly court. The chance of a "levy" is not taken into account, as its incidence is uncertain, and moreover it is looked upon in the light of that most common good, charitable help of the poor to one another in affliction and bereavement, and shall not, therefore, enter into our calculation. Neither in this estimate of cost is any sum (beyond the entrance fee) reckoned for the expenses of the annual festival, against which we should be sorry to say a word. The character of the few holidays enjoyed by the rural poor will rise as the poor themselves rise, socially and morally: not by discouraging their little opportunities of festive intercourse. The club dinner is to many a poor man his one yearly dinner party, more kindly and sociable than many a feast in Belgravia, and God bless it!

The annual meeting is held by rule at the Black Bear, at ten o'clock A.M. on the first Monday in May. A statement of accounts is then made, and of all receipts and disbursements of the club, excepting fines, which it will be remembered are summarily disposed of. "Sharing out" is then made; it is a bonus of a few shillings per member, and the investing labourer hears the amount with pleasure, as he means to forfeit the day's wages on the farm, and spend the whole day jovially. There will be dinner at one, for half-past one. His wife and family are to come afterwards, and usually the bonus will almost pay all.

At this moment, however, the club is in its pangs of annual dissolution, a process which usually occupies a few minutes, until some

member proposes the existence of the Order for another year; and that the members do consist of ——

Mark the advantage of the contrivance. "A heavy case" has burdened the sick fund during past years. It is one of the older men. There is no doubt that although he is now well enough to attend the festival, he will soon have another attack. Take his payments into club during past years in a lump sum, and five-and-twenty pounds would not cover them, independently of interest. But he has had nearly ten pounds for sickness; so his name is left out of the renovated club list, and the election is made this time without him. The old man is kindly treated, every one thinks, for he receives bonus like the rest, and a dinner ticket gratis. He will accommodate himself to his position with the resignation common to men used to bear the stroke of adversity. He will not spoil the pleasures of the day by so much as a murmur.

Another member struck out is a man who has been always a troublesome customer. He would be sure to be on the sick fund as long as the rules allowed, and is now on superannuation allowance. He had a narrow escape last year, but now they tell him he may have his bonus and dinner ticket for nothing, and may go and demand the half-crown a week from poor-rate, or go into the union. "Out-door relief," he consoles himself by remarking, "is a better thing than half-a-crown from the Order," which is subject to the weekly deduction of that six-pence, which is by rule payable in sickness and in health. The liability for burial money of six pounds is dismissed with a joke. Three or four lads of twenty are admitted, and by this time it is near the hour for Divine Service. There is a crowd outside and in the house. The band is thumping its big drum, and rending the air with its screams of agony in polka measure. The flags of the order are unfurled. The treasurers carry their wands, and wear their decorations. The farm labourer who is a member of this club, appears with his brother members in a blue and white cotton band over one shoulder, tied in a bunch of red ribbon under the other; and the procession starts for church. In church, the regalia, as the trumpery is designated, is placed in a conspicuous position; it was once put upon the communion-table. Morning Prayer is read by the curate, followed by a sermon from the rector, who always receives, and generally accepts, the invitation to dinner.

Far be it from our purpose to write one word tending to lessen any good influence among the rural poor. The sermon will have been on the duty of bearing one another's burdens, of the strong helping the weak, or charity and brotherly kindness will have been enforced, and so far well; but we must not forget that the clergyman's assistance upon such occasions is, in the eyes of the members of the club, a visible sign that their scheme has the approval of the Church.

When larger friendly societies were established in different counties, it was necessary to consider them to some extent as charitable institutions. Subscriptions were obtained for the work, and the co-operation of benevolent men was secured. Patrons and vice-patrons were found in the leading men of the county, who became honorary members, and, with the aid of the clergy and others, sound societies were fairly managed. The uppermost notion in men's minds, however, was that the work was a charity. There was the same delusion about savings-banks. The impression is fast waning in reference to the banks; but it still continues to array the friendly society in false attire. The friendly society is as much a matter of £ s. d. at interest, as are the deposits in the post-office savings-banks. In the year eighteen 'twenty-eight, a society, now called the County of Kent Friendly Society, was formed at Sittingbourne, in Kent, through the exertions of a clergyman, since identified with the question of life assurance among the clergy. Its capital is considerably above twenty thousand pounds, and its liabilities are several thousands less. In its earlier career the Kent Friendly Society elected a great number of farm labourers. Their employers looked upon the society as a charity, and paid for a time the monthly contributions of their men. The men, in their turn, considered it to be a charity, and that of a somewhat insidious kind; and when their employers ceased to pay the premiums, many of the assured forsook it. This ignorant proceeding was advantageous to the society, for the money they left behind them when they ceased to be members, and returned to their various "United Orders," was, to some extent, the foundation of its wealth.

A glance at its tables will show that had a farm labourer joined such a society instead of the one above described, when he was, say twenty-five years of age, he might have secured the following benefits—sickness and burial money, ten shillings a week and eight pounds at death, for the sum of twenty shillings yearly; and for another eight shillings a year he would have secured four shillings a week superannuation allowance, to commence at the age of seventy, when sickness pay ceases. The full pay in case of sickness would have been given, not for three months, but for a whole year, had he required it during the first five years' membership, and for a hundred and four weeks at a later time. The directors would, after the second year, have power to reduce him to half-pay.

This provision may be compared with that of the three months' sick pay from the United Order, and with the cost of that precarious shelter which does not in the long run secure anything but pauper's allowance and a final refuge in the union. In other words, the farm labourer thus investing would have been clear of the weekly half-crown of poor-rate relief. He would have continued in his cottage among his family, able—like many hale old men on the wrong side of seventy—still to earn a few shillings from time to time in light labour, which would be a pleasant occupation to him.

What, then, is the actual case of farm la-

bourers in relation to such societies? Do they flock into them, and avail themselves of the plan by means of which every healthy able-bodied labourer might secure independence, and obtain a comfortable provision such as never falls to the lot of a pauper? They do not flock in. As a rule, the farm labourers of Kent, for example, will not join the society. They prefer the "Brummagem clubs," of which there are hundreds in the county, and unnumbered thousands in the country. They leave to an inconsiderable minority of their numbers, the honourable effort of achieving independence by self-help.

It is a fact that, although the machinery of the County of Kent Friendly Society would place the bulk of the farm labourers above the degradation of pauperism at a much less price than they pay to maintain the sharing-out clubs, the mass of the agricultural labourers refuse such means of rescue. Why so? The answer to that question cannot be truly given without reference to the practical working of the poor-law.

Poverty does not prevent our peasantry from venturing upon the struggle, for the labourer pays more, as we have shown, for bad help than for good. It is not the wish to manage their clubs in their own way, as persons conversant with the question can testify. It is not the desire to conceal from the charitably disposed the amount paid by the club in sickness, though this weighs with some of the unscrupulous; and most assuredly it is not that they are careless or insensible to the blessings of independence. It is the fear that, if they break down for a time at any point in the long struggle, before they have secured their independence, their little treasure, laid by in the course of years of hard and honest toil, must go, before they can have help out of the poor-rate.

Pauperism and the beer-house friendly society are thus joined together in delusive compact. But once let the rules of the friendly society be remodelled, its management become trustworthy, its members divested of the opinion that pauperism is never to be considered part of the provision for them as a class, and there will be little danger to the club or to the club-house.

As to meetings of such societies being held in the beer-house, we shall not raise objection. The remedy for occasional excesses and abuses is to be found, not in interfering with the liberty of the citizen, but in his moral and social improvement. Apart from religious influences, there is nothing more conducive to such improvement than the labour to win independence by one's own exertions.

How has the immoral persuasion taken possession of our farm labourers that the poor-rate is "their rent-charge in lieu of the soil which they cultivate for others?" That it is for the distressed members of the community, and is their portion in lieu of the rood of land which, under some semi-barbarous conditions, men might live on if they could, is not disputed. But how does it mean that farm labourers should, by help of poor-law provision, be able to marry many years earlier than middle-class ratepayers can afford to marry; that they should frame their expenditure on such a scale as to leave nothing but their club when the evil day arrives; that the club should be so contrived, as by its annual dissolution and renewal, to throw cases upon the poor-rate?

The friendly society is taken into account by the guardians of the poor in every application for relief. In certain unions—it is feared they form but a small per-centage of the unions in this country—its members are not refused help, but a portion of the relief which would be assigned without deduction to applicants who, through improvidence, belonged to no club, is allotted to them.

A return showing the number of unions which adopt this partial concession on behalf of the benefit club would be valuable and easily obtained by the authorities. It is, however, to be feared that, in the great majority, the harsh and strict interpretation of the principle of destitution before relief, is insisted upon, so that the sick member of a friendly society would be denied all aid. But whether this be the case or not, the fact remains that a heavy discouragement is thus placed by the administrators of the poor-law in the way of the friendly society.

By the act known as the Small Tenements Act, the incidence of the rate was removed from cottagers; and the owner instead of the occupier, in all parishes where it was so agreed, was henceforth to bear the burden. It was, said the preamble, "expensive, difficult, and frequently impracticable" to collect the rate. The term "frequently impracticable" was held to be better than saying "frequently impossible," although the distinction was somewhat puzzling. But admitting the force of the reasons found in the "expense and difficulty, and the frequent impracticability," they belong to a time when there was not that prosperity in the country which has since raised the wages of farm labourers very considerably. Till this act is repealed, we may search in vain for the remedy to the mischievous view taken by the poor, which guides them in their choice or formation of a benefit society.

For it is matter of experience that the payment of the poor-rate would introduce an effectual check on the reckless and shameless system by which claims are commonly made, notwithstanding the vigilance and activity of the relieving officer, and the supervision of the guardians. Unscrupulous claimants who are encouraged to get as much as they can would be denounced without reserve by those whose opinion they would regard, and the duties of a deserving and much abused class of men, relieving-officers, would be lightened of much that is discreditable to applicants for relief, and harassing and annoying to themselves.

This new class of ratepayers would have restored to them the parish franchise, of which the above-named measure deprived them, and such a privilege would help to secure prompt settlement of the rate-dues. In nominating or voting for the guardians, the farm labourers might take some interest, and who would suffer

from such an exercise of their rights, even if an occasional nomination emanated from the Black Bear, and resulted in a Tory candidate nominated in vestry?

We believe, then, that such an alteration as should make the rural poor careful of the expenditure of the rate, accompanied by the knowledge that they are already paying into the "sharing-out" clubs sufficient to provide them with means adequate to their requirements, would call forth the efforts of respectable farm labourers, not debarred by age or infirmity, to achieve their independence.

One other step in the advance movement of sound benefit societies would be gained by a rule that no questions should be asked of an applicant, by the board of guardians, about the relief he has from his club. The members would find it to be in the interest of their society to prevent members who endeavoured to unite, dishonestly, sickness pay and union relief. A beneficial alteration would be introduced into the society's rules of a nature and for a purpose similar to that which at present is in force, and is to the following effect: "That no member of this society shall belong to any other benefit society on pain of exclusion." The object of this is to prevent persons who can earn, when strong and hearty, fourteen or eighteen shillings a week, from receiving twenty or twenty-four shillings a week when so ill as to declare "on" the funds of the club.

The provision applied to the rate would run thus, with a necessary and proper exception:

"That no member of this society shall receive union relief when 'on the funds,' unless, in the opinion of a majority of members at the fortnightly meeting, his circumstances are considered such as entitle him to the same."

The recipient of relief under these circumstances would lose nothing of his respectability by being so reduced by distress as to be thus recommended by his club to the guardians; no person of right feeling would brand such an applicant with the term, pauper. Let us be permitted, then, to urge on the attention of the select committee appointed to report on the poor-law, the good that might come of such a reform.

Something might also be done on behalf of the friendly society by direct legislation. A central power, appointed by parliament, is required for the purpose of systematising and exercising supervision over societies now struggling alone. A central board appointed by parliament would strengthen the hands of every society it recognised. It would inform societies of their exact financial condition, and point out the steps necessary to guard against insolvency, or to recover from a position of insolvency not hopeless. It would dissociate from its care all societies whose rules and management were not trustworthy. It would have powers, by means of official trustees, to fund the property or place it in safe hands, in conformity with present provisions of the Law of Friendly Societies. The rural poor would have every public encouragement which could fairly be given to their societies, and, if this were made concurrent with the change in the popular belief that the rate is their substantial though mean provision, which must not be injured by the friendly society, we should find safe and well-managed societies, or branches of them, becoming the rule instead of the exception.

A DIRGE.

Will the dead Hours come again,
From the arms of the buried Years
Though we call, we call in vain,
And they will not heed our tears.
Why, O why were they slain
By thy fears?

Will the dead Love e'er return,
For all thy late desire?
Can thy grief unclose Love's urn,
Or make of the ashes—fire;
Though the cinders yet may burn
Round the pyre?

Alas and alas for the Gone!
We mourn and we mourn in vain,
Like a ghost, or the dreamy tone
Of some long-forgotten strain,
Their memory haunts the Lone
But with pain.

AUNT BELLA.

Aunt Bella had been the eldest of a large family of brothers and sisters, all, except herself, remarkable for good looks; dark-eyed, chesnut-haired girls and boys, with clear cut features and summery cheeks and lips. Their parents dying early, she had fallen into the troublous inheritance of the mother's cares without her blessings, and had so soon dropped her own little comforts and preferences, and left them behind so far out of sight in tending and caring for her troublesome brood, that she totally forgot to look back for them, and so came to live in other folks' life far more than in her own.

She had passed all her maiden life in London, and could speak as an eye witness of strange things I had read of, and people whom I took to be pretty nearly as mythical as my well-beloved Sindbad and Aladdin. She remembered Lord George Gordon's No Popery riots, and her brothers' rushing in with scared faces and the stifling scent of fire about them, from the place where Lord Mansfield's noble library and rich furniture were a-blaze. She had curtseyed to George the Third pottering about his gardens at Kew, and she had once, by what chance I utterly forget, been in the mysterious penetralia of the palace itself, where she had enjoyed a glimpse of the "sweet Queen," of Madame d'Arblay's adoration just returned from morning service, and sitting weazened and grotesque, with a sallow visage and a grand point-lace fly-cap, amidst a group of florid Princess-daughters in lilac taffety with green top-knots on their powdered curls, and looking like a bunch of

full-blown auriculas. "And not one of them my dear," quoth Aunt Bella, "dared, for the life of her, sit down in her mother's presence without special permission, however her poor young legs might ache with standing."

Then there was the delightful story of the tea-party at Mrs. Betty Deering's, a quondam schoolfellow and friend of Aunt Bella's, where she had had the honour of contemplating Doctor Johnson at feeding time. "All the women my dear," she would say, "ran mad about the great Dr. Johnson in those days. He was as much the fashion as mode silk and point ruffles, though for my part I declare I found him vastly unmannered and loutish the only time I ever was in his company. For though poor Mrs. Betty had asked a choice little party of ladies to meet him, and though she spent the best part of two days in her pastry-closet, rolling out the cakes and whipping raspberry creams to please his palate, he never gave her so much as a civil word for all her pains, but sat glowering and sulking and supping up dish after dish of tea as fast as she could serve him with them, till I thought he looked more like Burly Bruin in the story book, gobbling down the hot porridge, than a book-writing human Doctor. And all the ladies sat round the table, nervously smoothing down their laced aprons or playing with their fans, not daring even to whisper to one another, much less venture on a remark to the great man, not even clever Miss Letitia, Mrs. Betty's youngest sister, who I know had been hard at her books for a week before, that she might distinguish herself in conversing with him.

"At last, my dear, when tea was nearly over, and the Great Doctor had eaten and drunk more than half the dainties on the table, poor Mrs. Betty contrived to pluck up a spirit, and made a bold effort to get one little word of praise in return for all her trouble, by asking him very modestly whether he approved of the cheese-cakes—I am quite sure he had swallowed half a dozen of them at least—for they were made by her own hands from a famous receipt of her grandmother's. But instead of the pleasant word the poor soul was weak enough to look for, Bruin turned upon her as sharply as could be, with a snap and a growl.

"'Madam,' says he, 'if your cook had had the making of them, she would have done more justice to your grandmother's recipe!'

"What a flutter it put us all in, especially poor vapourish Mrs. Betty; and how glad we were when the Great Doctor rolled himself surlily out of the parlour before the tea-things were removed. It was like having a nightmare taken off all our hearts, and we grew quite sociable and merry, after Mrs. Betty had swallowed a double dose of her drops to get over the disappointment. I remember we talked about the new French dances, which were thought so charming, and which I had never seen. I know we talked of them that evening, because when we were all standing up to take leave, old Mrs. Di Vavasour, who had been a beauty and a great toast fifty years before, and who had just been describing to us the fine birthnight parties she had shone at in her teens, insisted upon giving us a few steps as a sample of what she called the passy-pied, which was a favourite dance in her days, though I don't believe she had the name of it quite right. And so with her hood on, and her gown tucked up for walking home, brisk Mrs. Di went tripping about to show us the figure, till her stout quilted petticoat, being unused to such gay doings, broke loose and fell about her heels, and so put an end to her dancing."

Sometimes, but only when she was quite sure of godpapa* not being at hand to hear her, Aunt Bella would indulge me with a song, or at least a scrap of one, in a small treble, cracked and weak, but perfectly in tune, and not without some taste and feeling in the using. Her ear was admirably correct, and she had once learned to play a little on the harpsichord: enough to "pick out" the store of tunes she knew, which had been a great pleasure to her in a quiet way, "But when I married, dear," said she, one day, "Captain Vance—" she never spoke of him familiarly as Roger, but somehow the formal surname never sounded cold or formal in her mouth—"Captain Vance could not endure to see my brown paws fumbling over the keys, and old Mrs. Vance detested music, even if it was good, so I soon left off playing, and, indeed, I should never have made anything of music, though I love to listen to it dearly."

Of all Aunt Bella's ditties I think my favourite was a fragment of a ballad tacked to a sort of rub-a-dub monotonous tune, and ending with the refrain of "I shan't get to sleep to night!" But what the rest of it was about, I have long utterly forgotten, except that there was something about "snakes" and "fire" in it, which gave the whole composition a smack of diablerie, greatly to my fancy.

Then there was the well-known song from the Beggar's Opera, which so often does duty now in modern ball-rooms, as a dance tune. I learned it first from dear Aunt Bella's lips, and were I to try to sing it now, in a voice scarcely less quavering than hers was then, I should surely catch myself adorning the tune with the little old-fashioned trill and shake of the head, with which she always accompanied a certain high note long drawn out with coquettish emphasis towards the close of the strain.

She had an outlandish song too, with what she called Polish words, of which I fancy she understood as little as I did, and perhaps, after all, they were mere gibberish, but Aunt Bella believed in their genuineness, for she had learned them from a schoolfellow who was the child of a Russian merchant. The tune was quaint and barbarous enough I am sure to have been Chinese, and each verse ended with the words, "To mi dola, To mi dola," and then, in a little bird-twitter, "pree, pree, pree, pree, pree!" with which the song died out.

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* See page 323 of the present volume.

When in a merry mood (and that was not seldom) I used to hear Aunt Bella as I came in, "brumming" over her work a comical old pet stave which I never heard sung by anyone else, though, for aught I know, it may be to be found in one of the plays she had seen in her childhood. Rare or common, its roystering curtness used to delight *me*, and thus it ran, duly pointed here and there with satirical emphasis:

Master Tom is married,
Pray what says St. Paul?
If I'm not mistaken,
"Marry not at all!"
Boys, before you marry,
Mind the golden rule,
Look before you leap,
Or else you'll play the fool!

For my delectation, too, on grand occasions, Aunt Bella would perform a moral and descriptive nursery ballad, entitled, "Go to Church, Kitty." The words, looked at now through the spectacles of my latter days, seem a sort of versified Whole Duty of Woman, for the use of the prim little damsels of old mother-in-law Vance's time, in breast-knots and high-heeled shoes; though, indeed, it might give useful rudimentary instruction to the present improved generation in the social duties of their after life. The ballad was in the form of a dialogue between "Kitty," who seemed to be a maiden of low degree, and her admirer, whose superior rank was delicately hinted at by his appearing only under the title of "Mr. Gentleman." One fine Sunday morning, Mr. Gentleman opens the conversation as follows:

Go to church, Kitty!
Go! go! go!

(Kitty, answering con fuoco.)

No! Mr. Gentleman,
No! no! no!

(Mr. Gentleman, astonished.)

For why? For why? Miss Kitty, for why?

(Kitty, doggedly.)

Because I can't go to church like a Ladye.

Here the poet strikes in with a description of the subsequent action, pithy in matter, though faulty in rhyme:

O then, Mr. Gentleman, he bespoke,
And a fine silk gown for Kitty was *bought*.

Mr. Gentleman, now confident of success, again attempts to lead Miss Kitty in the way she should go, but again unsuccessfully. Once more Miss Kitty pertly replies with her "No! no! no!" and her swain once more attempts to influence her by the gift of some other choice article of dress. "A fine straw hat," for instance, or, "A fine lace veil," but all to no purpose. The art of the singer used to consist in protracting the dénouement as long as possible, by enumerating all the contents of a fine lady's wardrobe, one by one, whether they would fit into the verse or no. At last, after half an hour's haggling, driven to desperation by repeated refusals, Mr. Gentleman chances to hit on the attractive bait of "a gold ring," at which the cunning little hussy was aiming all the time, and she fairly forgets herself in the joy of her success, and answers in an allegro movement:

O yes, Mr. Gentleman!—now I will go!
O, now I will go! O, now I will go!

Whereupon, in a hazy vision of wedding finery, the audience applauds rapturously, and the performance closes.

Poor, patient Aunt Bella! How I used to worry her, by pertinaciously insisting on Mr. Gentleman offering more and more bribes of pretty things to his wily sweetheart; though I knew, with a child's quickness, that finery was not her *forte!* I could see even then that she had no notion of setting off her homely little person to the best advantage; nay, she would often make her appearance in raiment of such incongruous forms and colours, that my dear mother, who made her own spare but graceful figure a very model of quakerish neatness, used sometimes to remonstrate with her on the subject, as seriously as if those terrible buff chintzes à grand ramage, and those salmon-coloured and blue-striped taffeties—I always marvelled where she got them, unless they were relics of her London days—were really signs of some great moral delinquency. But it was all of no use. Aunt Bella's taste was not to be reformed by precept or example. She still persisted in fastening fantastic poufs (I think she called them) of spotted muslin round her grizzled hair, instead of decent caps; held pertinaciously to high-heeled shoes to her life's end; and was never seen without a flounced apron of some sort. Yet, Heaven knows it was no inherent love of finery that made Aunt Bella obstinate in her eccentricities of dress, for she never put on, to my knowledge, the few trinkets she possessed. They were heirlooms of some value, inherited from cross old Mrs. Vance. One day, I remember her showing me a beautiful little antique ring, a diamond and ruby star; and my asking her why she never wore it? How she laughed, dear soul, at the question! "Why, Boonie, dear," she answered—Boonie was the pet name she always called me by; but its derivation is utterly lost to me in the mists of infancy—"why, Boonie, do you think these ivory hands of mine are likely to be improved by putting jewels on them?"

I thought they did not want improving, and I told her so.

"Ah, child!" said she, "but I know better; and so I told Captain Vance, when he tried to smarten me up, years and years ago, with a pearl suit from Hamlet's. We were living near P—— then (the cathedral town where the glee club was), and my beloved had been up to town about some improved telescope, which he was very anxious to get, and which cost a world of money."

I must stop a moment to think over the sweet cadence which that strangely-poetical title, "my belovëd," pronounced in three distinct syllables, used to have in Aunt Bella's mouth, and how far from laughable it sounded, though applied by a homely old woman to her homely old

husband of thirty long years. She often spoke of him so; always, in the few months which separated his death from hers, except when she was more than commonly moved, and then she would call her departed husband "that dear angel."

But to go back to the story of the pearl suit from Hamlet's

"When he came back from town," said Aunt Bella, "bringing the telescopes and all sorts of scientific instruments besides, he put a little purple morocco case into my hands, and told me, very pleasantly, that I must wear its contents for his sake, and that he had bought them quite a bargain, owing to the fashion of them having somewhat gone out. Then he went into his study, and shut himself in with his packing-cases till tea-time. In the meanwhile of course I opened the case, and there, child, lay the loveliest pearl brooch and earrings, with a twist of seed pearl for the neck! How sorry I felt, for I knew I must pain him by begging him to send them back, lest he should be more pained by seeing me wear them. But for all that I could not help standing before the glass and trying the pretty twist round my old throat; but, Lord! child, it made me look like a blackamoor, so I turned away pretty quickly, and popped it into the morocco case, and never looked at it again. It pained me sorely to tell my beloved that indeed, indeed, I could not wear his beautiful present, and that with his leave I would very much rather have it changed for the silver coffee-pot we had long talked of buying.

"At first he thought me silly and unkind, and was quite crusty about my refusal, and for three or four days he hardly spoke a word to me, nor would he let me do anything for him as usual (the consequence of which was that he caught a terrible chill from putting on his under-waistcoats unaired, for he regularly put back in the drawer those that I warmed and set out for him). And all those days I did nothing but cry and repent what I had done to pain my kind husband, and twenty times I wanted to tell him I would keep the pearl suit and wear it, or dress myself out as a May-day queen, sooner than he should be angry with me. But when he was laid up with the sore-throat, he grew quite pleasant again, and let me come about him, and never so much as mentioned the cause I had given him for vexation. And then I found out that the morocco case had gone back to Hamlet's in exchange for the tall silver coffee-pot with the ebony handle, which stands in the eating-room cupboard, and I do think I like it the better because it cost me all those tears; for you see after all, Boonie dear, Captain Vance indulged me in the very thing I wished."

When godpapa returned from his walk, he had always his superannuated pointer Duke following at his heels. A respectable quadruped was Duke, who spent the greater part of his days grumbling in a remarkably small green kennel in the court, and whom I consider as the dog of the most imperturbable demeanour and the stumpiest tail I ever saw. Godpapa Vance always dressed for dinner; that is, he had a whole armour suit of wraps to lay aside, and a somewhat lighter panoply to put on—I do believe he changed his raiment with every breeze that blew—and, for some mysterious reason past my finding out, a black ribbon always spanned the stone-coloured waistcoat at dinner-time, sustaining a small eye-glass, which I do not think he ever used.

Dinner was rather a solemn affair, to be sure, and neither Aunt Bella nor I seemed to be talking our own talk while it lasted; but I used to pardon the dulness of the feast, in consideration of its daintiness; and then we were soon upstairs again, and godpapa went straight to his studies or his slumbers, and did not appear in the drawing-room for hours. In the interval, Aunt Bella and I would trot in and out of the flower-beds in the little square of garden over the way, where bees and butterflies always seemed more alert than elsewhere, round the musky purple scabious bushes and the long sprays of sweet blush roses at the gate. When it was damp or windy, and we stayed in-doors, an episode would sometimes occur, in which, to my shame be it spoken, I used always to take especial diversion.

I have mentioned the splendid cabbage-roses which grew round the windows of the basement story in Meadow-row. Those roses were the object of frequent predatory attacks by the idle boys of South-cove, as Aunt Bella well knew, and she seemed to feel by instinct when a party of young Bedouins were stealing round the house-corner by the steps, to clutch a branch of the fragrant flowers and scamper down the road with their booty. In the first years when I knew her, and even after her sight began to fail, she would noiselessly raise the sash of the corner window, just enough to put out her head, and watch the small malefactors creeping along the railings. But no sooner did they stretch their hands towards the prize, than up would go the sash to its full height with a bang, and Aunt Bella, towering awfully in her fortalice, would launch after the fugitives, as they took to their heels, a volley of such unearthly inarticulate noises, compounded of groaning, shrieking, and cackling, that I am sure I wonder how they had the courage ever to return to their nefarious enterprise. And to make the explosion of her wrath more effective, the kitchen-door on the side steps would be sure at such times to fly open, and Tackett or Keziah would rush madly out, duster in hand, make vigorous demonstration at the retreating foe, and they would come back panting in a few moments, distanced by about a quarter of a mile.

I do not think I ever stood within the sacred precincts of Godpapa Vance's study by daylight. It was only in the evening dusk, by special invitation, that we children were allowed to put foot within that awful chamber, lined on two sides with book-shelves, and on a third with prim little black cabinets, filled with pale unmeaning-looking shells and preserved beetles of

vicious aspect. The window, which took up nearly all the fourth side of the room, used to be open on these solemn occasions, and, on the side of the writing-table nearest to the light, were displayed such of the aforesaid shells or insects as godpapa thought fit to call upon us to admire. His large wicker arm-chair and a smaller chair opposite to it were the only sitting accommodation in the room. Large smooth mahogany instrument cases there were in plenty; but what mortal child would have dared make free with their mysterious support, under the very eye of the great enchanter, and the surveillance of the tall violoncello case which stood stark in the corner by the window, like a corpulent familiar?

There were evenings which were marked by a more than common solemnity, however, when not only I, but all my mother's little tribe of nestlings, ranging between four and nine years old, used to be summoned to the celebration of the mysteries in godpapa's study. On these occasions it was dark before we were called in, and when we entered, the largest telescope was planted in front of the open window, and the lamp had a large green shade on, which made the room so dark that it was very difficult for our restless young legs not to entangle themselves in some of the manifold stumbling-blocks which encumbered the floor. Then after weary pauses of preparation, occupied by godpapa in pointing the telescope, wiping the lenses, and going through other cabalistic forms, we were called forward one by one and directed to peep at Jupiter, or Saturn, or the mountains in the moon. And, indeed, it was all pretty much the same to us which of the heavenly bodies we were expected to see, for godpapa was always dreadfully cross and fidgety on those momentous evenings, and we were frightened and awkward, and the sky was generally full of clouds, and the stars were pertinaciously obstinate in playing bo-peep among their feathery folds, so that I can answer for those provoking planets more often than otherwise disguising themselves in the form of huge black lumps suspiciously like the opposite chimney-pots to my eyes, except on one or two occasions, when the apparition of something bright scurrying, as it seemed to me, across the corner of the lens, made me jump backward in such trepidation as once to bring the back of my head into unpleasant collision with the chronometer-case behind me.

It was only on those awful telescope evenings that Aunt Bella took part in our scientific pursuits in the study. She would be in and out of the room a dozen times in half an hour, and, when invited, would apply her eye to the glass and ejaculate, "Ah! wonderful!" years after, dear soul! she had ceased to be able clearly to distinguish even the stitches in her netting. I know, now, that she bustled in and out, that she might be always ready to cloak our awkwardness and smooth away a sharp word from godpapa, with a caress bestowed in the gloom on some little curly head, or by the stealthy present of a morsel of the candied iris root that always lurked in the queer little old world bonbonnière of chased silver, with a brown agate in the lid, which she carried in her pocket.

The only time I ever heard Aunt Bella offer a word of remonstrance to her lord, was on one of these evenings, when he had driven us nearly wild with his crusty ways and his prohibitions not to move or speak, or do anything but what it was utterly impossible we should do, namely, see some astronomical conglomeration announced as forthcoming on that night. Then, hearing by some small sniffs and gurgling gasps that the younger ones were on the brink of a demonstration, dear Aunt Bella charitably hustled the delinquents out upon the landing-place, exclaiming with a backward glance, "Roger Vance! Roger Vance!"—this, I suppose, was her culminating symptom of irritation—"*don't* make the children fancy you are angry with them;" and so swept us off to a game at beggar-my-neighbour or hunt the slipper. So those astronomical recreations, if they were thorny times to us, were no less stormy and anxious for Aunt Bella.

THE GIRLS THEY LEAVE BEHIND THEM.

The British soldier fighting the battles of his country, and returning after his term of service to his native village, a bronzed veteran, with medals on his breast and money in his pocket, to gratify the pride and relieve the necessities of his parents in their declining years—is certainly a cheering spectacle. But the British soldier getting drunk and infuriate, smashing heads with pewter pots in public-houses, and taking the opportunity of being turned out to run a muck in the streets, and attack the passers-by with his belt, is as certainly depressing to the well-regulated mind. The British soldier, in fact, is a very noble fellow, when he does not happen to be a savage, which his best friends must admit he occasionally is. I know that there has generally been a difference of opinion among high military authorities as to how far it is desirable to make him quite respectable. The Duke of Wellington said, as the result of his experience, that the greatest rascals always fought the best; and this opinion is probably not unrepresented among commanding officers in the present day. Soldiers' libraries, soldiers' clubs, soldiers' workshops, and all the other modern means of improving the intellectual and moral condition of the men, do not find such general favour among their superiors as might be supposed. There are still colonels of the "good" old school who would tell you in confidence—as George the Third gave his opinion of Shakespeare—"It won't do to say so, you know, but all this new-fashioned nonsense is ruining the men. What have they to do with books, and having their condition ameliorated, as they call it? By Jove, sir! if this goes on they will get a great deal too clever for discipline, and what will become of the service then?"

Our representative colonel exactly hits the point in his last remark. The educated soldier is a great deal too clever a fellow for the kind of discipline which used to be enforced, but which it has been found safe to modify in deference to the improved material. If the experiment has succeeded so far, why not carry it a great deal further? Our volunteers, who may be supposed to be all persons of respectable education, do not find drill and its attendant duties incompatible with intelligence and knowledge; and although they are, of course, not so hard worked as the professional soldier, still it must be remembered that the latter has nothing else but soldiering to do. The fact is, that education assists discipline instead of destroying it, provided that the discipline be enforced with proper judgment. And here we have the secret of the objection entertained by the old school. Ignorant ruffianism is easier to govern than intelligent respectability. It is less difficult to deal with a pack of hounds through the medium of an active whipper-in, than to keep a body of men in order, mainly by moral force—men with brains and tongues, to say nothing of hearts, and who have perceptions and feelings in common with those who control them. The highest military authority has officially informed a certain officer who held a rather conspicuous position for many days at Aldershot, a short time since, that temper, judgment, and discretion ("or words to that effect") are the first qualities necessary for command. The dictum applies forcibly to the relation between officers and officers and the relation between officers and men. As for the idea that a fighting-man must be a thorough blackguard, it is one disproved by constant experience.

It is scarcely necessary to give special reasons for urging the intellectual and moral improvement of any class of men. But as it has been held that the soldier must not be improved, upon practical grounds, we may venture to give a reason why he should be improved, upon practical grounds also. The question of promotion from the ranks has always been a difficult one, and, while it remains as it is, it can scarcely be said to be settled. The old companions of a man so promoted he must renounce altogether; and, with his new companions, he can scarcely be considered at home. By the mess he may be reckoned a capital fellow, and he may be highly popular; but he is somehow not "one of them" in general society, and the difficulty is the more marked if he have a wife. For it is not likely that any long course of meritorious conduct which that probably estimable woman may have pursued, is known to anybody but her husband. Even were her merits recognised, the crown has no power to give a commission to a lady which will compel her to be accepted by her own sex. The consequence is, that, unless in a very exceptional case, she will meet with nothing more than bare toleration, and, feeling herself considerably more out of place than her husband, will shun society, contenting herself by putting in an appearance at an occasional great gathering, in order to show her right to be there.

The march of a regiment from its old quarters is a gay gallant spectacle. "The Girl I left behind me," played by the band, has an exhilarating sound, and suggests a romantic young person, such as you see in pictures, taking an affectionate leave of a splendid-looking fellow in full uniform and curled moustache; the scene, a pleasant bit of country close to a stile with a church spire just visible through the trees. The young lady vows to be true to him for an indefinite time—generally understood to be "seven long years"—and he, on his part, is never to forget her—nev-er! The love passages of the ranks, however, have not been uniformly of a cheering character to contemplate, and those of its members who have entered into the bonds of wedlock are worse off than their less scrupulous comrades: a state of things not quite as it should be. They have married with the consent of their commanding officers, and their wives are borne on what is called "the strength of the regiment." These comparatively fortunate partners accompany them, and are provided for equally with themselves. But only a small number are allowed to each company; and the men who have married without waiting for a vacancy—as large numbers do in every regiment while in quarters—are ruthlessly torn away from their families, who are frequently left without the smallest provision. During the absence of the regiment their case is hard enough, for they have no recognition from authority, and, without recognition, they can have no rations. A certain proportion of soldiers' wives may manage to obtain an honest living; but the majority—and it is of no use blinking the fact—obtain a living which is not honest, and which cannot be considered reputable by any stretch of charity. It may be said that the men should not marry without their colonel's consent when they know the chances to which they and their wives will be exposed. But the argument is worth nothing. It is as useless to preach prudence of this kind to soldiers, as to any other class. Those who err in this respect, be it remembered, are not likely to be the *worst* men in a regiment.

A great deal is being done for the soldier in these days. He is well fed; he is well clothed; and, if he be not too well paid, he is none the worse off for it; for the possession of money means the temptation to spend it in liquor, the great enemy of himself and the service. He has a great deal of liberty for the purpose of exercise; he has clubs, and in some stations he has workshops. He has every opportunity for educating himself and cultivating his mind. But all these advantages will never make him what he should be, so long as his domestic relations remain what they are. Even when he has married with proper regard to the regulations of the service, when his wife is lodged and otherwise provided for by the state, his is a very curious kind of home life. Only the other day—during a celebrated trial—it was urged that the wife even of a non-commissioned officer could not have been

annoyed by having a sentry placed near her sick bed, as she had never been used to greater privacy, and had no feelings to be outraged. Let promotion from the ranks be extended as you will; but it must always be impossible to place men and women who have become reconciled to the accomodation afforded to soldiers and their wives and subjected to the influences naturally arising therefrom, on a real equality with gentlemen and ladies. The gulf between the two classes is felt on the one side equally with the other; and, so strongly on one side in particular, that non-commissioned officers have repeatedly refused commissions because they knew the mingling to be a mere mockery. If therefore the condition of the soldier be ever to be really improved, it must be through a change in his domestic condition, and towards this object we are glad to see that a very useful suggestion has lately been made.

The suggestion comes all the way from Madras, and it is something to say in its favour that it has been acted upon there with success. It consists in the establishment of "Female Workshops"—which might be more correctly described as Workshops for Females—in some of the European regiments. One of these is now maintained in connexion with the Sixty-ninth Foot, at Fort St. George. But the experiment has been tried on a more extensive scale by Brigadier-General Grant, commanding the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force. This officer has, at his own expense, established workshops for females in the European corps under his command; and so successful has he found their operation that he has suggested to the government the introduction of the system throughout the army. The effect of the measure is not only to furnish employment of a remunerative kind to the wives of soldiers, but to produce valuable moral benefits. It is stated that the local government has refused to forward the Brigadier-General's suggestions, to the home authorities — upon what Un-Circumlocutional ground it would be difficult to conceive—but they deserve attention none the less, even though received through an irregular channel. In England, such institutions would be productive of immense good. The clothing of the troops, for instance, is now supplied on the contract system: why should it not be made in workshops established at the head-quarters of every regiment, and more especially at the stations of the depôt battalions? In that case, not only could the greater number, if not all, of the wives of the men be employed, but a direct advantage would accrue to government from this disposal of the work. Soldiers' clothing is now made by miserable creatures in dens which are a frequent source of disease. It is obvious that the work could be better performed in large and well ventilated workshops, and the discipline of such establishments could not fail to have a good moral effect.

We have heard of the experiment being tried somewhere, of clubs in which the wives and families of soldiers are admitted with the men. This is a plan which would be worth considering—at any rate as regards one part of the club-building. Objections might be made on the score of the too intimate association involved. But the association could surely not be more intimate than that necessitated in barracks: while the mingling might be conducive to outward propriety, which is a very good preparation for better things.

Some comparison has been made between our military system and that of France. It can scarcely be said that they manage things better in the latter country as regards soldiers' wives. In the French army, marriage, even among officers, is discouraged as much as possible. To wed without permission is a military offence, and the proportion of married soldiers is very small. But the arrangement is open to objections which would be so strongly felt in England, that it may be considered altogether inapplicable to our army.

The material condition of the soldier is receiving every kind of attention. Let his moral condition be improved by domestic influences, and his professional utility cannot fail to improve itself. By having care for soldiers' wives, we shall not only save them from degradation, but shall promote the welfare of their husbands, and through them conduce to the interests of the service; which, just now, is in much need of enlistments, and especially of re-enlistments.

TOO LATE FOR COPENHAGEN.

"Land ho!" sung out the sailor from aloft, bending down from his giddy perch on the yard-arm, and using his hand as a speaking-trumpet. The captain sprang into the rigging and swept the horizon with his glass. I imitated his example, as I was weary of my floating prison.

"Land it is!" said Captain Brown, cheerfully; "not in that direction, though, Mr. Compton, sir. You are looking at Fehmern. The mainland lies on the starboard tack. Mind what you're doing, you, there, at the helm. Keep her full, can't ye?—there's Holstein. Looms low, don't it, and yet land's always attractive to a passenger!"

By-and-by we stood into the pretty fiord at the extremity of which stands Kiel. The setting sun turned the smooth waters of the bay into rippling gold, and I looked forward with pleasure to the prospect of landing. The Emma was the property of Hallett and Jones, my employers, who did a great business both with Hamburg and the Baltic ports. She was laden with a valuable cargo of hardware, drugs, dyewoods, and sheet lead, to say nothing of several hundred tons of the rails required for one of the first of the Danish railways. These goods were consigned to a well-known firm, Krantz and Co., of Kiel, wealthy and well-known merchants with whom our house had had extensive transactions. And I, who was in the full confidence of my principals, had been sent as supercargo. Now-a-days, supercargoes are

seldom needed for even the most valuable freights, save in the China trade. But there were other reasons for my mission. Messrs. Krantz were debited in our books for considerable sums; and, although their commercial fame was spotless and their wealth undisputed, it was thought desirable that a balance should be struck. There were long and complicated accounts to go through, and it had appeared advisable to my chiefs that I should inspect the papers and receive the money; the rather that I could take the opportunity of my presence in Denmark to inquire into the real nature of certain investments at Copenhagen which had been represented to us as excellent. I was to come back in the brig, which was to take in, at Copenhagen, a return freight of Baltic wheat. It had been settled that without waiting for the Emma's unloading, I was to hasten to the capital by way of Schleswig and Jutland.

When we dropped anchor in Kiel harbour, the last crimson flush of the sunset had died out on the horizon, with its ever-green oaks, rolling sand-bluffs, flat pastures, and thousand windmills. On the following morning I set off, guided by one of the hangers-on of the hotel where I had spent the night, in search of the residence of the Messrs. Krantz. The guide, a Dutch lad in a green jacket and wooden shoes, was loud in his praise of the wealth and merits of our correspondents. It was old Mynheer Krantz, he declared, who had first turned the stream of Baltic traffic into Kiel Bay; it was he who had encouraged the setting up of manufactories in the town; it was he who had, at his own charges, cleared away a dangerous sand-bar on which many a vessel had struck when the wind was easterly, and the currents too strong to be resisted. Krantz and Co. had thriven wonderfully. They were very rich. The narrator ought to know, for had he not a brother, Rupert—his own name was Clauss, at my service — who was messenger in their office? They were liberal masters. And then their charity to the poor, their hospitality, and their tulips! Clauss, like a true Hollander, grew eloquent on the score of the tulips of Messrs. Krantz, father and son, for the Co. appeared to be mythical. And before he had finished we stood before the merchant's door.

A fine old house, large though low, and built of brickwork covered over with a sort of glossy cement of a pinkish colour, seamed by huge black beams of oak, heavy and stout enough to have been the timbers of a line-of-battle ship. The latticed windows, framed in a thick growth of creepers, had queer old diamond panes set in lead, queer mullions of carved stone, and little polished reflectors placed outside those of the lowest story, to convey to the inmates the images of persons passing in the street without, exactly such as I had seen before in Flemish towns. Behind the house was a huge walled garden, flanked by conservatories, and one wing of the mansion was devoted to the counting-house; through the window of which I could see the grey head of an elderly cashier bending over a heap of papers and glittering coin. The brass-plate, on which were inscribed the words "Krantz and C^{ie}," was as bright as Mambrino's helmet, and from the stork's nest on the roof to the moss-grown pavement, everything looked venerable, quiet, and serene.

M. Krantz himself was from home, but I was cordially received by his son and junior partner, Paul Krantz, one of the finest young fellows I had ever seen; tall and fair-faced, with bright honest blue eyes and yellow hair. He was some years younger than myself, being about five or six-and-twenty, but was married. He and his young wife and children resided with his father, who was a widower and had no son but Paul.

"We have been duly advised of your purpose in visiting Kiel, Mr. Compton," said the young merchant, as he shook hands with me; "and though my father was unfortunately unable to remain at home to receive you, we can, if you please, complete the necessary arrangements without waiting his return. Captain Brown has already looked in upon us with the Emma's bills of lading and the invoices, and I am quite prepared to go through the accounts and hand over the money to your safe keeping."

We—M. Paul and I—had a rather severe morning's work over the voluminous accounts, with all the mass of vouchers, letters, bills, couched in every language written throughout Northern Europe; but at last we came to a satisfactory conclusion. A considerable sum was due to Hallett and Jones, and this sum tallied, within a few marks banco, with the amount of my chiefs' estimate. The cashier was summoned.

"Now, monsieur, we can give you your choice," said the young Dane, smiling good humouredly, "how you will take the balance. Gold, or bills on London I cannot at this moment offer you; but silver, or Hamburg notes, or Russian paper roubles, or notes of the Royal Bank of Denmark, or Dutch coupons: to all and any of these you are heartily welcome. Shall we pay in silver rix-dollars? I only warn you that the weight will prove rather cumbrous."

"Why, yes," said I, hesitating, as I remembered that a sack of no small size and a porter would then become necessary to the conveyance of the sum of which I was to be the temporary custodian, and hastily computed the various cares and annoyances inseparable from such unwieldy treasures; "yes, I think I will take the balance in Danish bank paper."

And, in Danish bank paper, the money was duly paid over to me in exchange for my receipt. The notes were securely lodged in my big black leather pocket-book, steel chained and patent locked, and always heedfully kept in an inner breast-pocket of my coat. My reason for selecting Danish notes in preference to Hamburg notes was, that as I was bound for Copenhagen, where I had to inquire, as I have previously said, respecting the eligible character of certain investments, I was sure of being able to exchange the notes for good bills on London,

or government securities, without losing by the transfer; which would not have been the case had I chosen the German currency. Business over, M. Paul Krantz expressed much hospitable regret that I would absolutely insist on leaving Kiel that very day. He had hoped, he said, that I should have been able to stay as a guest under the family roof for a day or two at least, that he might have the pleasure of showing me such humble lions as Holstein could boast of, and that I should have stayed long enough to have made acquaintance with his father, my correspondent, who, his son was good enough to say, had heard much praise of me when he met my chiefs in London a year ago.

However, I could not linger; for the journey by land through the southern part of the Danish peninsula would, I knew, be slow, and I was desirous to have time, not only to make the needful inquiries regarding the much-lauded investment, but also to explore the museums and other stock sights of Copenhagen before the Emma should have completed her unloading and be ready for her return freight. I had arranged for the hire of a light carriage, and had bespoken post-horses, and must really go northward that afternoon.

"You will lunch with us, at any rate. I will give Margaret a hint to advance the dinner hour," said the young representative of the great firm of Krantz, who spoke French and English with equal fluency. Then, suddenly he frowned and started, exclaiming, "Hundsfoot! What does the fellow want, staring in after that fashion? Arnold, Rupert, ask his business, some of you!"

I turned hastily. All I could see was the fast-vanishing figure of a tall man, wearing one of those loose rough coats that sailors call "gregoes," and a red Sclavonian cap, such as Baltic mariners affect. Not a glimpse of his face could I catch; but there was something suspicious in the hurry with which he was shuffling off. Paul assured me that he saw the ruffian greedily eyeing the heaps of notes and silver which the old cashier, Herr Niklas Frost, had spread upon the desk beside me. However, Arnold and Rupert, the two messengers, came back merely to report that the stranger had made off at a brisk pace in the direction of the wharfs, and that they thought him a Russian seaman, by his gait and attire. M. Paul broke into a cheery laugh, saying:

"I am afraid Mr. Compton will report us Danes as singularly timorous folks, startled at shadows, but the face I saw was no pleasant one, and the way the rogue gloated over the money on that desk was not encouraging to a merchant. But come, let me offer you some refreshment, and introduce you to Madame Krantz."

I was introduced to Madame Krantz, a very pretty young woman, with the dazzling complexion and pale gold hair for which many of the North Jutlanders are celebrated, and also to the two charming little children, Christian and Ellice (which latter name corresponds to our English Alice), and I was shown everything worth seeing in the house and gardens. Such wealth of tulips, assorted like the patterns of some rich mosaic pavement and blooming gloriously; such a rose garden; such wall-fruit, and stocks, and dahlias, and quaint old-world blossoms, I had never before beheld. And the pictures—choice old battle-pieces, pretty bits of pastoral scenery, the work of Dutch masters, or of the best artists of that Danish school that learned to use the brush from Dutch example—were good and valuable, and harmonised with the oak panels and carved cornices, as perfectly as did the massive furniture of heavy wood and crimson velvet.

M. Paul and his pretty wife and I parted with civil regrets that our acquaintance should terminate thus early. They came out to the door to see me start, under the guidance of the red-jacketed postilion who had control over the calèche and the two heavy Holstein steeds. Travellers were at that time greater rarities in Kiel than they have become since the war began, and quite a knot of people had assembled at the corner of the street to see the Englishman drive off. Among those idlers, I recognised the tall figure in the grego and red cap.

Off I went, clattering and rattling up the dusty road. The speed was not great, and neither coaxing nor scolding could induce my gaily-attired driver to accelerate his pace beyond the comfortable jog-trot of Holstein journeyings. His good humour was incapable of being ruffled; for, however impatiently I might address him in my scanty stock of German, he did but turn his broad placid face towards me with a pleasant smile and a polite "Ja, ja, Meinherr;" but the stout bay steeds were never much interfered with. Holstein men and Holstein horses are proverbially strong, slow, and amiable.

The sun went down long before we had traversed the sixteen English miles of dusty road lying between Kiel and Eckernfiord, but there was a bright full moon that made travelling safe and easy, as well as cooler and more enjoyable than the journey by day, so I pushed on as fast as post-horses could take me, and reached the city of Schleswig soon after midnight. I allowed myself only a few hours of sleep at the quaint little hotel; starting northwards on the following morning, and so early that the dew clung in pearly clusters to every blade of grass in the great meadows to which the thousands of comely cattle were being slowly driven; the larks were just beginning to rise and warble out their morning hymn as the yellow sun shone level across the meres and meadows. I found that I really did make more rapid progress as I advanced towards the north, the horses being fleeter and less sluggish; the postilions less apathetic. My hope was to reach the Nyeborg ferry in time for the last steamer across to Seeland, and to sleep at Ringstad, take the railway on the following day, and arrive at Copenhagen before noon. To my vexation, however, while still there were long miles of road between me and the ferry, the clouds began to thicken and grow dark to seaward, while the sultry air was fanned by short

puffs of wind that shook down the yellowing leaves from the hedgerows. Sure token of a coming storm.

At one small station, in Fünen, midway between Flensburg and Odensee — where I had found the postmaster asleep and his servants absent at some village feast, and had consequently had to aid myself in harnessing the fresh horses — before the traces were quite adjusted, a cloud of dust came rolling like smoke along the road, and up dashed a "forbudd," or avant courier, very hot and breathless, with his horse in a lather of foam, vociferating for horses.

"My master's in a wonderful hurry, wonderschön!" said the man, swinging himself down from his reeking saddle, and stamping his heavy boots upon the ground to get rid of the dust, "but he pays well, and wants to be well served."

And, indeed, the animal he had ridden looked, with drooping head and spur-marked flanks, none the better for the furious rate at which she had sped along. The postmaster looked at her rather ruefully. "If I mount a forbudd for the traveller I shan't allow him to go tearing along, wild-huntsman fashion, as thou hast, Niel Hansen. Is he some foreign ambassador, my lad, or going on the king's service, that he ruins horseflesh in this way, all that he may get some hours earlier to Copenhagen?"

The postilion replied that he knew nothing of him. The stranger was a foreigner, but he spoke the best of Danish and German, and tossed his dollars about as children toss beach pebbles, all the time rating and expostulating with those whom he found too slow in driving or putting horses to his carriage. He was some great baron, no doubt. Perhaps a Russian or a Swede. At any rate, he was eager to hasten on, and the postmaster had better get the cattle ready forthwith. By this time my own calèche was ready, and, in the stir and exhilaration of rapid motion, I soon forgot the impatient traveller who was a few leagues behind. The roads were in unusually good order, and the latter part of my journey was speedily performed; but as I came in sight of the dark blue sea line and the white houses and low church tower of Nyeborg, the copper-coloured masses of cloud rolled sullenly up, and the peculiar gloom that precedes a summer storm fell like a veil over land and sea. Then came a flash of lightning, and as if it had been a signal for elemental war, hail and rain came dashing fiercely in our faces, making the horses swerve and rear; the thunder rolled in emulation of the roaring of the wind that suddenly sprang up. It was in a drenched and draggled condition, half blinded by the lightning, and soaked with wet, that we reached Nyeborg.

"The steamer for Korsöe?" was my first inquiry.

The landlord of the clean little inn removed his blue and white china pipe from his mouth, and pointed with the stem of it towards the ferry. I could see that the water was everywhere flecked with foam, and that no glimpse of the opposite shore could be distinguished through the driving rain. There was no steamer visible in the little haven, except one black and silent craft, lying snugly under the shelter of some piles, with deserted deck and smokeless chimney.

"You won't sleep in the island to-night, Herr Englander. The last boat had a tough job to struggle across. The wind's getting round to the north, too. Not a skipper in Denmark, in his senses, would try to make the run over to Korsöe this evening, not even if his heart were as stout as old Tordenskiold's."

The landlord's assertions were fully confirmed by the sailors and custom-house officers whom I found crowding together under some sheds near the wharf, and wistfully peering through the rain and gathering darkness at the tempestuous sea. It was a mere summer squall, they said, but they were afraid that mischief would be done among the fishers and small coasting craft. However, the storm would doubtless have spent its fury before morning, and the ferry would then be easily traversed, so the delay was not very serious, after all. An hour or so earlier I should have been in time to be a passenger on board the last boat that had ventured out, and, at the cost of some risk and a wetting, should have slept in Ringstad. As it was, I was too late.

The accommodation which the kro of Nyeborg offered me was of the character most common in Denmark. Everything was exquisitely clean, homely, and snug. By a slight stretch of imagination, I could have fancied myself a guest at one of those old English hostelries that Izaak Walton selected as the rendezvous of his Piscator and Venator, that quaint type of rustic trimness with its lavender-scented sheets, sanded floors, honeysuckle-draped porch, and rude plenty. The supper that was set before me was a good one, and so was the Rhenish wine. I had not quite finished either, before I heard a rapid roll of wheels and a mighty cracking of whips. I could distinguish by the sound that a carriage drawn by four horses had dashed up to the door of the kro. Then there was a hum and clatter of voices and feet, and a tap at the door of my room. In came the handmaiden, who combined the duties of waiter and chambermaid, and who was as spruce in her velvet bodice and scarlet kirtle, her heavy gold earrings and silver hair-skewers, as if she had no work to do. Her round blue eyes were very wide open with astonishment.

"Herr Englander," she said, in her Jutland dialect, so like Yorkshire English in its breadth and sound, "a great knight or count has just arrived, extra-post, and——"

"— And if Mr. Compton will pardon his intrusion, he is here to answer for himself," said another, and a stronger voice, speaking in very excellent English. A tall elderly gentleman appeared on the threshold, bowing politely to me, hat in hand, and wearing a long blue cloak, on which the rain-drops glistened. The newly-arrived traveller, no doubt. But what he could want with me? unless I should prove to be the

occupier of the only available parlour of the kro, and he wished for permission to share it, I could not guess. Probably the stranger saw my perplexity; for he said, stepping forward,

"My name is Krantz — Jorn Krantz; and when I tell you that I have travelled post-haste from Kiel, on purpose to seek a few moments' discourse with Mr. Compton of the house of Hallett and Jones, you will not, I hope, refuse to listen to me."

I made a polite reply, and begged that Mr. Krantz would be seated. He gladly removed his heavy cloak, and stood before me in his tightly-buttoned black coat, with a neat white cravat, a small diamond brooch stuck in the breast of his frilled shirt, and the party-coloured riband of some foreign decoration in one button-hole —altogether, from his grey head and calm intelligent face down to his well-polished boots, the type of an old-fashioned merchant of the highest commercial stamp. He was rather proud and stiff of bearing, though very urbane, and his voice was that of a person used to speak with authority. Disregarding my invitation to sit down and share the appetising meal that smoked upon the table, his first act was, as soon as the waiting-maid had left us to ourselves, to rise, and lock the door. Then he turned to me; and as his face came for the first time under the full light of the lamp, I could see that his features were quivering with émotion. Twice he tried to speak, and twice the words seemed to choke him; but he turned his head away, and covered his eyes with his hand, before he said, in a voice that was weak and tremulous,

"You see in me, Mr. Compton, the unhappy, almost heart-broken father of Paul Krantz. Oh, my son! my son! Fond and proud of him as I have been, what shame is this that he has brought upon my white hairs! Bear with me a moment, sir—only a moment."

And the old merchant—in whom I could not doubt that I beheld the head of the great house of Krantz and Co.—sank into a chair, covered his face with his wrinkled trembling hands, and sobbed aloud. But this emotion was soon conquered; and then, in a broken voice and with averted face, the poor old gentleman told me what here follows:

The Krantz family had been in commerce for several generations, known for a probity and honour that were traditional among them. The first black sheep of the flock was the old merchant's only son, Paul Krantz. I started when I heard this, half incredulous of such an accusation against the fine, frank-looking young Dane whom I had so lately seen, and who had impressed me very favourably; but then the accuser was his own father! I was shocked to hear that Paul was a hypocrite, a gambler; so wedded to high play, both on the Bourse and at the lansquenet-table, that he now threatened to engulf his father's whole fortune.

"All I have is his," said the old merchant, sadly; "and if he has fallen so low as to rob his father that he may be in funds for a fresh trip to the Hamburg Exchange and the card-tables, I can bear it in silence. After all, in a few years it would, in the course of nature, have passed to him. But my good name is in danger now, and *that* I would keep free from stain at any cost. Mr. Compton, the notes in which my son paid over to you the large amount due to Hallett and Jones — those notes——" He stopped, gasping.

"What of them?" exclaimed I, getting excited in my turn, and mechanically thrusting my hand into the inner pocket, where the steel-bound pocket-book lay securely.

"Those notes are forgeries!" answered the merchant, hoarsely.

And then the rest of the sad story came out. Paul Krantz had wilfully misled his father as to the probable date of my arrival to settle our account with the Kiel firm. He had had considerable losses of late in some wild stock-jobbing speculations on the Paris Bourse, and his agents had threatened him with exposure if the deficit were not made good. Desperate, and confiding in his father's indulgence to bear him scathless in case of discovery, the unhappy young man had contrived that his parent should be absent from home at the time of my arrival, and had paid me in fictitious notes, a large quantity of which, availing himself of his master-key, he had previously lodged in the cash-box. These notes were in a manner forced upon me, as a conjuror forces a card, for even had I chosen to encumber myself with the silver, there were not nearly enough dollars in the counting-house to liquidate the claim of my employers.

"I returned, and suspecting that something was amiss, interrogated my son, and examined the books and the cash," said the merchant. "Paul prevaricated at first, but presently made a full confession, imploring mercy, not only on account of the ties of blood between us, but for the sake of his innocent wife—she, sir, knows nothing of his errors, and his disgrace and his punishment would kill her outright. And therefore, without losing a moment, I started on your traces, using every exertion to overtake you, which, however, but for the most lucky incident of your being detained here, I should hardly have done on this side of Copenhagen. And once there, you would, doubtless, have presented the notes, when discovery—scandal——"

And here he broke off, groaning, but soon found voice again to tell me the object of his haste. He entreated, drawing a thick rouleau of bank-notes from his bosom, to be permitted to redeem, with genuine paper of the Royal Danish Bank, those forged securities that I had so unsuspiciously accepted from his guilty son. The loss, as he justly remarked, ought, in no case, to fall on Hallett and Jones, and he would willingly make any sacrifice to prevent a stigma from falling on the spotless reputation of Krantz and Co. Paul was frightened, if not penitent, and his father was resolved to send him to America, trusting that change of scene and

habits might wean him from evil. If I would kindly pledge myself to breathe no word of the transaction until I should see my employers, disgrace might yet be avoided.

I consented. My duty to Hallett and Jones was clear, and, besides, it would have been very damaging to my future prospects to have earned the imputation of having neglected the interests of employers so kind and liberal as my chiefs. The grief of that noble old man would have melted a harder heart than mine, and I readily made him the required promise. The notes were duly counted out and the exchange effected, and it was with a sigh of relief that I secured the true bank-paper under lock and key in my stout black leather pocket-book. As I did so, M. Krantz held out his hand and shook mine heartily, and announced his intention of returning home at once, without repose, to complete his arrangements for the reformation of his misguided boy. He at once rang the bell and ordered his horses to be got ready. In half an hour we parted company, with thanks and blessings on the old merchant's part.

"Old Jorn Krantz is your friend for life, remember," he said, as he threw his cloak over his shoulders and stepped into the carriole; "but how very fortunate it was that I overtook you as I did!"

I thought so too. Very likely the ultimate loss of the money might have been prevented; but delay, scandal, and annoyance, with probable litigation, were evils almost as bad; and I secretly congratulated myself on the lucky chance of my detention at the Nyeborg ferry. Next morning I crossed without difficulty, and before nightfall was at Copenhagen. Naturally, my thoughts dwelt much on my painful interview with the aged merchant, whose conduct appeared to me admirable. There was, however, one thing about M. Krantz that puzzled me. It seemed to me as if I had seen him before. Not his face. That was wholly unknown to me, but his figure: that tall, erect, and yet supple form, with rather a peculiar carriage of the head. It seemed strangely familiar to me, especially when the merchant had flung his cloak round him before stepping into his carriage. I perplexed myself on this score for some time.

On the day following I called at a bank which the old merchant had recommended, and found, as I had expected, the names of Krantz and Co. a sufficient introduction. My Danish notes were duly exchanged for good bills on London, and for crisp promises to pay on the part of the Old Lady of Threadneedle-street. I found the bankers remarkably courteous and communicative, and we parted very good friends, and I strolled up and down the streets for a while, gazing at the shop windows, full of curious ornaments and quaint objects from Iceland, Sweden, and Russia; at the fisherfolk, gorgeous in blue and red and white, and resplendent in gilt frontlets and jewelled earrings; at the rosy lasses from the Scandinavian mainland, in their scarlet bodices and high caps, staring with round-eyed curiosity on the splendours of what seemed to them a wonderful city, and chattering volubly to each other in Norse or Swedish as they trotted past with their milk-pails. But I was not long allowed to play the part of a passive spectator.

I was in a glove-shop, buying a pair of number eights of the so-called Swedish kid, under the patronage of a smiling gloveress, whose knowledge of English did not extend beyond the words, "yes, very well," when I heard a sound of running, and a clamour of voices, and I looked out into the street. My appearance was greeted with a shout of "The Englander himself!"

One of the clerks from the bank I had so lately left, breathless, flushed, and without his hat, rushed in and caught me by the collar. At his heels were several other men, porters and messengers of the bank, most likely, but they were accompanied by two policemen in uniform, who followed the clerk's example in grasping me roughly, gruffly uttering the words, "In the name of the king and the law."

"Are you all mad? Let me go, you blockheads, or you will repent this," cried I, angry though amazed. I shook them off for a moment, but only to be clutched by so many strong hands that resistance was impossible, and I was dragged, with torn coat and disordered cravat, in ignominious procession down the street, the object of hooting from the crowd that rapidly assembled. The abusive epithet most frequently repeated was "Schwindler," and this was intelligible enough, though why it should be applied to my unlucky self was a mystery. The mystery was soon cleared up. I was dragged into the bank, and confronted with the bankers. The good-humoured partners looked wrathful enough now. On the counter lay a heap of notes, and I was sternly asked whether I denied having paid in these notes less than an hour before? I took a glance at the numbers. The fact was undeniable. I admitted it.

"You hear him? He confesses. He owns to being the man who passed off these forged notes," cried the banker, looking round on the assembly; "after *that*, he may be taken before the Correctional Tribunal at once."

"Forged notes! You do not surely mean——" I began, but I grew quite faint and sick, and I could not continue. They took my silence for a proof of guilt, and no wonder! I was taken before a commissary, or some such personage, then before a judge of instruction, and was fully committed for trial. That the notes I had paid in were forgeries, there was no doubt. All experts, including a clerk from the government bank, were unanimous on that head. In vain, rallying my bewildered faculties, I begged for a private interview with the judge, unwilling to tell the open court how and why I had received the notes, and to suggest the only conjecture that appeared possible to me: namely, that by some strange mistake the fictitious bank-paper had, for the second time, been put up in my pocket-book. Refused this, I could merely declare that I had received the

notes from the hand of M. Jorn Krantz, head of the respected firm of Krantz and Co., and being asked where, was obliged to own that it was at Nyeborg ferry, whither he had followed me on "urgent private affairs."

This lame explanation was treated with very natural contempt. I was bullied, browbeaten, and urged to confess that I was an accomplice of a certain notorious gang of foreign escrocs then infesting Denmark, whose audacity was well known. Unfortunately, I could furnish no proofs of my respectability, for my papers were all on board the Emma, even the vouchers, &c., having been left with Paul Krantz, in a sealed envelope, to be given to Captain Brown at his next visit. The telegraph was not yet in existence between Copenhagen and Kiel. I had no help for it but to go to prison, and to prison I went. Bitter and melancholy enough my reflections were during the five ensuing days. Danish prisons, like all else in Denmark, are clean and neat, and I was not harshly treated, but I met with no sympathy. The magistrates who examined me, the jailers, the chaplain, the very English sub whom I teased by repeated letters to the British Consulate and Legation into paying me a reluctant visit, all believed me a scoundrel of the deepest dye, and took my unvarnished tale for a clumsy invention. I wrote urgently both to the Krantz family and to Captain Brown, but had received no reply when the day for my trial arrived.

"You will be put to the bar along with your captain, it seems," said the turnkey, as he summoned me to come forth, as the judges were awaiting me.

"My captain?"

"I mean," said the turnkey, contemptuously sneering at my apparent hypocrisy, "I mean your head rascal—Klopstok, the swindler—just caught."

In a few moments I passed into the crowded court, and was thrust into a sort of coop, or dock, in which stood a tall man, a prisoner like myself. I could not repress a cry of astonishment. This man, Klopstok, was no other than the aged merchant, old M. Krantz, who had held so important a conference with me at the Nyeborg ferry. True, the grey hair that had given him a false look of venerable age was gone, and in its stead appeared a short grizzled shock of coarse black, while the gold-rimmed glasses no longer shaded the cunning dark eyes that leered at judge and jury, witness, and fellow-prisoner, with the consummate effrontery of one who knew that he had nothing for it but to put a bold face on the matter. He greeted me with a nod and a grin.

Before I recovered from my surprise, to my great joy I saw friendly faces and heard kind voices, and M. Paul Krantz, accompanied by Captain Brown, and by a benevolent-looking white-haired old gentleman, whom he introduced as his father, the true Jorn Krantz, as half Copenhagen could testify, came bustling into court to speak to my respectability, and to explain the mistake.

I was liberated, and the good Danes seemed to be as sorry for the rough treatment I had experienced as if it had been really incumbent on them to recognise my honesty when appearances were so terribly against me. To do Klopstok—alias Bernard, alias Orlemann—justice, he did not attempt to deny the trick he had played me: certain as he now was, that he could not escape punishment on the ground of his almost innumerable frauds. This man, a Russian by birth, was the chief of that gang of swindlers, of whose daring Paul Krantz had spoken to me at Kiel. He it was, who, on the arrival of the Emma, had contrived to worm out, by means of interrogating one of the mates whom he met at a wharf-side tavern, my business in Denmark. He, too, in the disguise of a Baltic mariner, had dogged me to the Krantz mansion, and had seen, through the window, in what currency I was paid the large sum due to Hallett and Jones, of which he resolved to possess himself. My quick departure somewhat disconcerted him, but his ready wit had devised a plan for turning even that to profit, and he had followed me post haste, to personate the part of an afflicted father, and to delude me into exchanging good notes for forged ones: a scheme in which he had but too well succeeded.

By great good fortune, the swindler had been captured with my money still on his person, and as both I and Paul Krantz—who, I need hardly say, had been basely maligned, and was neither gambler nor knave, but one of the best of good fellows—had a list of the numbers, the judges ordered the property of Hallett and Jones to be restored to me; and the bankers, who were profuse in their apologies, were also saved from loss. Before I left Copenhagen, Herr Klopstok was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. I think, however, he must have escaped, for, during a recent trip to the French dockyards and arsenals, I could take my oath I saw him in a suit of party-coloured serge, in irons, on the deck of a French frigate, bound for Cayenne.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XL. A DEAD AND GONE FESTIVAL.

WHEN poor little Lily reached the foot of the common staircase, she found nobody there but the portress, who was engaged in a more or less amicable discussion with the Auvergnat in a blouse, who, with the assistance of a donkey, a cart, and several cans, was in the habit of bringing round the milk to that particular street. She had just informed the Auvergnat that he was a fichue bête; to which he had responded, that she the portress was a vieille sorcière, who was born in the time of Pharamond, and had not invented gunpowder. Thereupon Madame la Concierge was about making an assault upon the uncivil milkseller with her broom; but at this conjuncture the postman fortunately entered the lodge with the early batch of letters, and for ten minutes or so the portress had quite enough to do in examining the superscriptions, peeping between the interstices of the envelopes, and smelling the seals of the missives brought by the Mercury of the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau.

"Pouah! comme ça pue le musc," she said, nosing one delicate-looking billet. "Pink paper, too, satiné! Allons donc! And a hand like a spider out for a promenade, and all that for the soi-disant vicomte, who has his varnished boots mended, and owes two terms to our proprietor. Ah, ah, my brave, if you don't have warning before another month is over your head, my name is not Cornélie Desgracq. Il pleuvera des congés dans cette maison. Why, how now, ma petite; whither are you bound so early?"

This was to Lily, who had timidly asked for the cordon.

"I am going for a walk—I am going to take a bath."

Lily faltered. It is certain that nobody yet ever did anything wrong in this world without having to tell one or more falsehoods to commence with. The embryo murderer has to tell a lie about the pistol or dagger, the would-be suicide about the poison he purchases. The ways down which the bad ship Wickedness slides to a shoreless ocean must be greased with lies. Lily's criminality was of no very deep dye; yet you see she had been unable to stir a pace in her expedition without telling a fib.

"There you are, then," said the portress, pulling the desired checkstring. "Go thy ways, and a bright good morning to thee. I like that petite ma'amselle," she continued, musing as the girl slipped through the portal; "she gives herself no airs, and, all things considered, is not far from being pretty. Cela a un petit air de rien du tout, qui n'est pas mal. Going to have a bath, was she? Well, it's hot enough. I wouldn't mind one myself if that pot-au-feu did not demand my attention." Good old portress! Since twenty years had she been pre-occupied by that same pot-au-feu, perpetually simmering. "Mais dites moi donc un peu, what on earth makes all the girls in our time so very anxious to take baths? Does that scélérat Cupidon keep the baths of La Samaritaine, I should like to know? When I was a girl, we were not so fond of bathing."

And Madame la Concierge, having concluded her examination of the postal delivery, proceeded to skim her pot-au-feu.

Lily went out into the great desert: to her, quite trackless, and barren of oases. She had cast her skin, as it were. She had done with her old friends, her old habits, the old-new name with which they had invested her. She was now only Lily, and Quite Alone.

Still, though she was solitary among a crowd of thousands, and could not hope, between sunrise and sundown, to light upon one friendly human face she knew; though she was at sea, in a frail cockboat, without mast or rudder or pilot in a howling ocean, stretching she knew not whither; though she had scarcely the means of obtaining that night's shelter, or to-morrow's bread, Lily was on business. She was pre-occupied. She had affairs of moment to attend to. There never was, I conceive, any one so idle, short of an idiot, who, if he chose to ask himself the question, could not remember that he had something to do. Lily was quite overburdened with business. She had to get to England: God alone knew how. She was to do something there to earn her living: God alone knew what. Oh! she was a fully-engaged and absorbed young person; but, first of all, there was that locket to be sold. Inexperienced in the ways of the world as she was, she dared not flatter herself that nineteen francs seventeen centimes would take her to London. London! she had scarcely pronounced that word as yet; but it was fully settled in her minor consciousness that

she was going to London. Not a Turk in Asia Minor wakes up from his pipe-trance and thinks he should like a tour in Frangistan; not a Lascar coolie ships on board a homeward-bound Indiaman; not a long-tailed vagabond of Shanghai lays in a stock of rice and dried ducks for a voyage across the main; not a Genoese beggar-boy is sold by his padrone to grind the organ to the English heretics, but knows, although he may scarcely have mastered the words to say it, that he shall see London.

The locket! The locket! Lily knew that she was about to do a naughty thing, and, desperately as her mind was made up for the deed, she tried to stave off the evil moment of commission for yet a little time longer. Bishop, who murdered the Italian boy, set him to play with his children half an hour before he slew him. He, too, had made up his mind; but he luxuriated in deferring the thing for thirty minutes. We like to put the consummation of our villany off. A convict in a penitentiary told me once, that he counted seven hundred and fifty, neither more nor less, before he took pen in hand to commit the forgery which sent him to penal servitude for twenty years. I knew a man who repaired to an appointment from which his conscience told him sin would follow. As he was biding tryst, a flash of remorse came over him, and, turning a piece of money in his pocket, he vowed that if, when he drew it out, head should be uppermost, he would abandon his intent, and go away before the victim came. He drew forth the money, and head was uppermost; —whereupon the man broke his vow and kept his tryst to the bitter end. The flash of remorse had died away.

So, while Lily knew well that the locket must be sold, her poor little trembling spirit was casting about on every side for a respite, were it even of the briefest, from the inevitable act. She must be quick about it. She knew that; for discovery and pursuit, although not probable, were just barely possible. But oh! for another minute, another half-hour, before she would be forced to confess her unworthiness in her own eyes. Fortuitously, the bright morning air reminded her that she was hungry; and she remembered that she had had no breakfast. Where was such a meal to be obtained? She had walked as yet up one street and down another, not purposeless, but irresolute, and still staving off the evil time. She saw plenty of cafés around her: splendid cafés, all gilding and plate-glass; second-rate cafés; tenth-rate cafés, smelling of smoke, dirty, and generally ill favoured. The large men with beards who were visible in most of these cafés as she peeped through the glazed doors frightened Lily. There was one specially alarming creature in a fluffy white hat, a great glass screwed into one eye, a twisted chin-tuft like a colossal comma: who, with his hands stuck in the pockets of a pair of tartan trousers so wide at the waist and so narrow at the ankles that they looked like two jars of Scotch snuff, was standing, smoking, on the steps of a coffee-house in the Rue Montmartre. He greeted Lily with a hideous leer as she passed him, sticking his arms akimbo, and humming something about "La Faridondaine." She blushed and quivered as she hurried away. Oh! she must make haste to get to England. A vague intuition told her that Paris was a very wicked place, and that she was but a lamb in the midst of five hundred thousand wolves.

She saw at last a humble little shop in whose windows were displayed two large bowls full of milk, with a sky-blue basis and a yellow scum on the surface; sundry eggs; a bouquet of faded flowers; a siphon of eau de Seltz; a flap of raw meat with a causeway of bone running through it; several huge white coffee-cups and saucers; and the Siècle newspaper of the week before last. From sundry little blue bannerols bearing inscriptions in white letters, Lily learnt that this was a Crêmerie; that its sign was Au bon Marché; that bifteks, bouillon, coffee, and chocolate were to be had there at all hours, and that meals were even portés en ville—carried to the patrons of the establishment at their own residences. Furthermore, there was a tariff of prices which assured Lily as to the capacity of her purse to endure the charges of such a very modest little breakfast as she needed.

She entered the Cheap Creamery, and making known her wants to a brawny Norman wench with big gold earrings, who had a hoarse voice, the possession of which a corporal in the Chasseurs d'Afrique would not have disdained, and who, when she was called, did not answer "Voilà!" after the fashion of waiters generally, but thundered forth, "Vous y êtes!" Murmuring her brief commands to this formidable servitor, Lily was presently supplied with a big white bowl full of chocolate, and a large piece of bread, the which (the whole costing but eight sous) made no very serious inroad on her stock of ready money.

The place was full of working people; the men, in blouses; the women and girls, in neat white caps or kerchiefs tied round their heads, who were as kindly and courteous in their demeanour as, in the course of many years' wandering up and down the earth, I have generally found working people to be:—in every country save one. That one is not England; but they speak the English language in that one. Lily's opposite neighbours passed the bonjour to her, and helped her to the milk and the sugar without her having to ask for those articles; and one comely little grisette even offered her a share of the poached eggs she had ordered. A gentleman who sat opposite to her, who apparently belonged to the baking trade—who wore a monstrous-brimmed felt hat like an umbrella of which the handle had impaled him and the cupola flattened on his head, and who was powdered from head to foot with flour profusely, but was beautifully clean to look at—reached over to Lily when he had finished his repast, and handed her a copy of that day's Gazette des Tribunaux.

"It does not belong to the establishment, ma-

demoiselle," he said. "Their newspapers here are as stale as their bread. You can keep it as long as you like, and give it to the poor when you have done with it. For, if the Gazette des Tribunaux doesn't concern the poor, I don't know what does. I have the honour, mademoiselle, to wish you a very good morning."

With which mild witticism the baker bowed, touched the brim of the monstrous hat—he could not for the life of him get it off—and took his departure. He repaired to an adjacent salon de toilette, to be shaved, and, if he could only have got that hat off, he would probably, it being a jour de fête, have had his hair curled.

Lily was not frightened at the baker, although he was at least two inches taller than the man in the fluffy white hat who had leered at her in the Rue Montmartre. She was too sick at heart to smile when he offered her the paper; but she murmured out her thanks, and, persuading herself that it was still very early, and, eager to stave off her business yet for a few minutes longer, she began to read the Gazette des Tribunaux.

She had never set eyes on that famous journal before, and its contents, at first, absolutely horrified her. How wicked everybody in Paris must be to be sure! The eight pages of ill-printed matter were crimson with crimes. One-half of the world seemed to be prisoners; and the other half, judges, gendarmes, and executioners. Here was a viscount in the Charente-Inférieure who had poisoned his mother-in-law. A soldier in the garrison of Oran had struck his commanding officer, and was to be shot by sentence of court-martial. Dreadful vol avec effraction in the Avenue de Bondy! Sad case of juvenile depravity at Valery-sur-Somme! Awful conflagration at Brives-la-Gaillarde! Murder of three children by their mother at Noisy-le-Sec! An infant devoured by a wolf at Vitry-le-Français! Six men drowned at Meaux-en-Brie! An old gentleman aged eighty run over on the Boulevard Beaumarchais, and killed on the spot! Inundations, ravages of small-pox, poisonings of whole families through eating ragout of mutton with mushrooms, steamboat explosions, breaking down of suspension-bridges, all over the country! The news from abroad seemed as terrific as the domestic intelligence. They were hanging right and left in England. Everybody in Russia, who had not had the knout, appeared to be on his way to Siberia. The sufferings of the Poles were fearful. The garotte was as busy as a bee in Spain; a new guillotine had just been imported to the island of Sardinia; three Chinese mandarins, and wearers of the blue button, had been chopped into ten thousand pieces by order of the Emperor of China, while their wives had been glued between two-inch boards, and sawed in halves, longitudinally. Lily did not know that, when the editor of the Gazette des Tribunaux was short of foreign intelligence, he invented, or served up afresh so much of old news as would suit his purpose, or the somewhat blasé appetite of his readers.

She was about laying down the sheet over which, in mingled horror and uneasy curiosity she had spent some twenty minutes, when a paragraph at the foot of the Chronique, or collection of minor Parisian notes, caught her eye. It ran thus:

"Un Anglais à la Morgue. The identity of the body found days since in the Filet de St. Cloud, and in due course transferred to the Morgue, has been established. Affirmation has been made before the commissary of police of the section of the Hôtel-Dieu, by the Sieur Jean Baptiste Constant, native of Berne (Suisse), proprietor, domiciled at Paris, that the corpse is that of Sir Francis Blunt, Esquire, gentilhomme Anglais, to whose person he was formerly attached in the capacity of valet-de-chambre. This statement has been confirmed by the evidence of the Sieur Rataplan, restaurateur, of the quarter of the Madeleine; and papers found in the vestments of the defunct place the truth of their story beyond a doubt. What could have led Sir Blunt to this desperate act—a deliberate suicide being inferred by the authorities—is uncertain; but it appears that he was known as a constant frequenter of the Salons Frascati, and losses at the gaming-table may have been the primary cause of this sad catastrophe (triste événement). Milord Blunt had formerly been rich to millions, but of late had become much reduced in circumstances. With touching solicitude M. Jean Baptiste Constant has charged himself with the interment of the remains (dépouilles mortelles) of this unfortunate son of Albion."

Lily read this paragraph through, read it again and again, and fell into a dream. The names recorded were unfamiliar to her. She knew nothing of proprietors who were natives of Berne in Switzerland and were domiciled at Paris, of restaurateurs who lived in the quarter of the Madeleine. Sir Francis Blunt, with that thundering addition of "esquire," who was he? And yet—Jean Baptiste Constant, Rataplan, Blunt,—Rataplan, Blunt, Constant—had she or had she not ever heard those names before? She passed all the simple and sorry incidents in her life in review before her. She strove to remember every place where she had been, every one whom she had known—there were the Bunnycastles: the three sisters, the old lady, with her sentimental wool-gathering talk, the servants, the discreet apothecary, her prattling, ever complaining schoolmates. Then up came a vision of a gentleman in a cloak, who had spoken to her lazily, but sharply; and a vision of another gentleman, with a glossy black whisker on his cheek, who had held her in his arms, not unkindly. Again started up the image of the fierce and imperious lady, with her temper, her stampings, her frettings, and her scoldings. To her succeeded Cutwig and Co., the cheery foreman, the demure Miss Eldred, the large-mouthed clerk who grinned and ate apples. Was it at the Greenwich dinner she had heard the name of Blunt, or on board the steamer, when the gentleman with the heavy whiskers

and the gold-laced cap had given her chocolate? Was the sickly gentleman in the carriage on deck, named Blunt? Had Rataplan's name ever been pronounced at the Pension Marcassin? Did Marygold ever speak of a certain Constant? J. B. Constant—Jean Baptiste Constant—the name, the initials, kept ringing in the ears of her mind. But it was all a dream, and would yield nothing tangible. So soon as, for an instant, she thought she had gotten hold of a form and a substance, they slid away from her as though she had been walking on glass, and all was impalpable. As sometimes in a strain of music, and sometimes in a sigh of the wind, and sometimes in a word, forgotten so soon as it was uttered, if uttered indeed it were, Lily fancied that she remembered something—she knew not what, she knew not when, she knew not how;—and then the fancied reminiscence faded away into nothingness and a perplexing blank, in which memory had no place.

Very sadly she rose, folding up, she could scarcely tell why, the copy of the paper, and placing it in her pocket. The dream might come back again, she tried to think, and tell her something more definite. At present she was bound to go on her business. That dreadful locket! Yes; the evil time might be no longer staved off. So, she walked down to the quays that were about the Pont Neuf. It was a wonder she did not meet little Amanda on *her* morning walk, or Monsieur Philibert meditating on the grand doings the Pompes Funèbres would have when the corpse of the Emperor came home.

There were plenty of goldsmiths' shops on the Quai, plenty expressing on their signs quite a delirious eagerness to purchase gold, silver, and diamonds, at their utmost value. Lily entered the first shop on her way. The gentleman who kept it appeared to deal in all kinds of rags and bones, so to speak, of the precious metals. His counter was heaped with frayed and tarnished epaulettes; with coils of torn and shabby gold and silver lace; with coat-collars, coat-pockets and lappels, decorated with faded embroidery, and ruthlessly torn from their parent garments; with sword-knots, and satchels, and tassels, and bridal veils with silver spangles, and broken teapots, and mugs crumpled up as though they had been made of paper, and flute-mountings, and the tops of meerschaum pipes, and the lozenge plates from cigar-cases, and the bosses and mouldings from cartouche-boxes, and the stoppers of bottles from dressing-cases: anything you please to mention in the way of gold and silver. In front of the counter was a stout wire grating reaching to the ceiling, and in front of the grating was the dealer in the precious metals himself. He was smoking a halfpenny cigar, and, with the assistance of a pair of tweezers, was holding some loose pearls, which he took from a sheet of letter-paper, up to the light. He was a dealer with a very shock head of red hair, and had a very white pasty face, and very weak watery eyes, and very full, luscious-looking pink lips, and was a Jew.

"I won't buy anything this morning," he cried, as Lily, hesitatingly, entered the shop. "That scoundred Pifflard. He pretends to go to the Orkney Islands for pearls! There's not one of them here worth five francs, ma parole d'honneur."

Lily, wincing under this rebuff, was about to withdraw, when he called her back.

"Stop! What is it? What have you got? The défroque of a marshal of France, or the sceptre of Charlemagne? I'll buy anything for the sake of your eyes. I love eyes. I wish I could sell them."

He was such a florid dealer, and such a voluble dealer, and, withal, such a very hungry not to say rapacious-looking dealer, that Lily was more than half-alarmed at the manner in which he accosted her. However, there was no help for it, now. She nerved herself to a strong effort, and produced the ill-fated locket. She had previously taken out the hair of the Martyr King, wrapped it in a piece of paper, and put it carefully away in her bosom. At least, she would not sell *that*, she thought.

"And what might you want for this little bit of a toy?" asked the dealer, turning over the locket, as he spoke, with much contempt.

"A hundred francs," answered Lily, at a guess. "You see, sir, there are diamonds outside."

"I know, I know," retorted the dealer, who with avid eyes had taken stock of the whole. "Diamonds! Do you call these little pins' heads diamonds? They're nothing but beads: mere children's playthings. Come: I'll be liberal. I'll give you fifty francs."

Unused to bargaining in any shape, and perfect novice as she was in the marketable value of the precious metals, Lily could not but be conscious that an attempt was being made to swindle her. She humbly represented that the locket must be worth considerably more even than the price she had put upon it, and that fifty francs was really a sum that she could not think of accepting.

"Where's the hair?" cried the dealer, suddenly opening the locket and then shutting it with a sharp snap. "Where's the miniature of General Foy, or the tomb of Héloïse and Abelard, or the hair of your well-beloved, that ought to be inside?"

Lily replied that she had removed that which had been inside the locket. It was a relic, and she did not intend to sell it.

"Then I won't buy it at all," snarled the dealer, tossing the locket towards her. "Take back your trumpery, I don't buy empty lockets. Nobody likes to buy 'em; and to break up, it isn't worth a louis."

"Oh, sir——" Lily began to plead, as well as she could for the tears that were rising.

"Take it away. I think you stole it. I got into trouble last time about an empty locket. It belonged to a countess in the Faubourg St. Germain, and her chambermaid had robbed her

of it. They menaced me with the commissary. Me! Israel Sarpajou! Get out of the shop, or I'll call the guard."

The meaning of all which was, that M. Israel Sarpajou had been somewhat disappointed that morning in the quality of some loose pearls in which he had invested capital; and, not caring to lay out any more ready money just then, thought he could indulge in a little cheap luxury by baiting a girl whom he knew to be poor, and guessed to be friendless.

Indignant, and yet alarmed, Lily was hastily leaving the shop of the ill-conditioned dealer, when, in his vapid slobbering voice, he called out,

"Come back, little one. Give me a kiss, and you shall have seventy-five francs for your locket." But Lily stayed to hear no more, and hurried away as fast as ever she could.

She went into one gold and silver dealer's shop after another; but, through a kind of fatality, as it seemed, no one would give her anything like a remunerative price for the trinket. One overflowing philanthropist, who was a Christian, offered her twenty-five francs for it; another, who was a wag, advised her to make it up with her young man, and then she would no longer desire to sell the locket which contained his beautiful black hair—ses beaux cheveux noirs. A third was more practical. He was an optician as well as a goldsmith, and wore himself such large polygonal blue goggles as to look like a walking lighthouse. He told Lily that her locket was worth, at the very least, two or three hundred francs—not to melt, but as a work of art—and advised her, instead of selling it, to take it to the nearest bureau of the Mont de Pieté, where they would lend her half its value.

This benevolent counsellor gave her, besides, the address of a commissary priseur—one Monsieur Gallifret, who lived in the Rue Montorgueil. Thither did Lily repair with quickening steps; and very seldom, I will venture to surmise, was the first visit to a pawnbroker's paid so blithely.

Monsieur's office was up a narrow filthy passage, and three pair of stairs. There was a traiteur's on the first floor, and a preparatory school on the second; and the mingled odours of soup, scholars, and the bundles of wearing apparel in the pawnbroker's store-closets, were decidedly powerful, but far from pleasant. Monsieur Gallifret was not at home; but his wife was—a snuffy old woman with a red kerchief.

"A hundred francs," said Madame Gallifret, when she had examined the locket.

Lily bowed her head, meaning the gesture as a sign of acquiescence.

"Cent francs, ni plus, ni moins. Do you take it? Est-elle sourde-muette, la petite? Speak out."

"I will take it."

"Bon, what is your name?" went on Madame Gallifret, opening a large thin ledger.

"Lily Floris."

"Drôle de nom! Your profession?"

"Couturière." Oh, Lily, how fast one learns to lie.

"Domicile?"

"A hundred and twelve, Boulevard Poissonnière." She was making rapid progress in mendacity; but that locket had to be got rid of.

"Where is your passport?"

"My passport, madame?"

"Yes, your passport, your papers. Don't I speak distinctly?"

"I have none."

"Bien fâchée, then, but we can have nothing to do with you. No business is transacted in this office save with persons provided with papers perfectly en règle."

And once more Lily went forth into the street: the locket still unsold, and even unpawned.

BRITANNIA'S HEAD FOR FIGURES.

Once every year—on or about the day known as All Fools' Day—the country has to listen to its financial statement. This statement, or Budget, is made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—an officer who comes in and goes out with ministries. This Chancellor may, or may not, be an able man; his notions of taxation may be brilliant or common-place; he may be industrious, he may be indolent; he may be full of ingenuity, bold in expedients, and sound in principles, or he may be nothing more than the mere mouthpiece of a Treasury clerk. But, for the time being, with the sanction of Parliament, he governs the national balance-sheet. Having collected estimates of the probable national expenditure, or Rule Britannia side of the account, for the twelvemonth under consideration, he goes to the other, or Suck Britannia side—amongst the sugar, gin, malt, bill-stamps, and tradesmen, to see where the money is to come from. On the Rule Britannia side of his department—in his palatial drawing-rooms—he dispenses his millions with an open hand; while, as Britannia's factor, he collects some of his pence by taxing lollipops, and seizing poor men's bedsteads.

Since the days when Chancellors of the Exchequer were invented, the country has had some eccentric and jocular financiers. The more eccentric and jocular the financier, of course the more comic were the taxes imposed. One inventive genius in the art of Sucking Britannia thought it would be a good thing to tax bachelors, and an equally good, though somewhat contradictory thing, to tax widowers. This was in 1695. When the bachelor or widower tried to escape from this tax by getting married, the clever financier had him on the hip with another impost. Marriages were taxed as well as celibacy, and even births and burials were made to contribute to the Treasury. Later financiers revived most of these imposts, adding to these taxes on deaths and christenings. The tax upon the birth of children was revived at a

time when the good citizen was exhorted to increase his family, when the expenditure was very heavy, the National Debt growing apace, and financiers began to see an excuse for a large outlay in a large and increasing population.

A great advance has been made during the last quarter of a century in the art of sucking Britannia. The amount drawn from the resources of the country is still large — some think, with good show of reason, unnecessarily large—but it is drawn with less determination to favour the few at the expense of the many. The general apathy and ignorance existing with regard to the details of national finance, is an encouragement to Exchequer Chancellors not to do their duty. Our budgets, in all probability, would be wiser and more just if general education included something about taxes and taxation. At present, with the exception of the small doses of political economy administered at the universities, it includes nothing. Knowledge about the National Debt, the Consolidated Fund, and direct and indirect taxation, may be picked up by inquiring youths, as savages pick up the knack of wearing dress-coats and riding in cabs, but this can only be done by "self-help" and studying, not reading the newspapers. Few public teachers step forward to teach such lessons, the task not being showy and popular, but occasionally a speaker or lecturer is found who cares more for utility than popularity. Such a lecturer has appeared lately in the person of Mr. Thomson Hankey, the well-known banker and member of Parliament, who judiciously employed what little leisure he had during the parliamentary recess in delivering a descriptive lecture on taxes and expenditure.* Mr. Hankey is not an avowed financial reformer, and seems inclined to support the existing state of things, but the value of his lecture will be found in its clear statement of details. How little, the lecturer considered was known of those details, even in banking circles in the City, may be gathered from the fact that the lecture was delivered at the Bank of England Library and Literary Institute. At this expiring season of parliament we may profitably employ a few of our pages in giving the substance of this lecture, with a few remarks which may seem to us good in passing.

In former times there used to be a great state officer called a Lord High Treasurer, who often had no treasure to guard, and who often had to deal with payments in kind, which might be wool or any other material. This treasurer, however, has been superseded by a set of commissioners appointed by the Crown, whenever there is a change of ministers, the chief of whom is called the First Lord of the Treasury, and is generally, though not necessarily, the prime minister. The financial duties of the ministry, however, are always performed by another of the commissioners, called the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose special duty it is to see that the proceeds of Sucking Britannia are equal to the cost of Ruling Britannia. He calls for estimates, some of which, such as the amount required to be spent on the army and navy, are supposed to be considered by the cabinet, that is, by the ministers in a body, and when these estimates have been approved, their total is ascertained, and then begins the task of selecting the taxes. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to propose a larger expenditure than his last year's or expected forthcoming income will meet, he has then to ask Parliament to sanction an increase in some old tax, or the imposition of a new tax; but if he can make out an excess of probable income on paper, he asks it either to reduce or abolish one or more existing imposts. When his scheme has been sanctioned by Parliament his duties may be considered theoretically at an end. The heads of each department, such as the army or navy, ask Parliament to sanction their own estimates, and when there is no special representative of the department in the House of Commons—the House in which all money bills originate—the duty then devolves upon the Secretary of the Treasury, but not upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Secretary of the Treasury is the generally recognised authority respecting the expenditure of the country, excepting for the army and navy.

The estimates, having been already laid before Parliament for some weeks previous to their being taken into consideration, are then put to the vote in the House of Commons, and when voted, the first step, but only the first step, has been gained. No money can really be got at until an Act of Parliament has been formally passed for a transfer of money from the Exchequer Account at the Bank of England or Ireland. This Act is very properly called a Consolidated Fund or Ways and Means Act, and it directs the Comptroller of the Exchequer to obey a royal warrant granted by the Crown to the Lords of the Treasury, and to order a transfer of money from the Exchequer Account to such other accounts as require money for those services in ruling Britannia which have been specified in the votes of the House of Commons. It is the duty of the Speaker to take care that no larger sum is granted for the use of the Treasury in this way, than the total amount of the votes which have actually been passed from time to time in Committees of Supply. Formerly, a much larger proportion of the expenditure than at present was sanctioned by previous Acts of Parliament, consequently, a much smaller sum came annually under the control of Parliament. All the money received on account of the government is considered to belong to the Consolidated Fund. It is paid in as received to the Bank of England or Ireland, placed to the Exchequer Account, and cannot be touched without the sanction of an Act of Parliament, either passed at the time, or which has already been passed, and is then in full force. Towards the close of every session the financial legislation is completed by the passing of an Appropriation Bill,

* Published by Effingham Wilson.

which appropriates every separate vote that has passed the House of Commons during the session, and completes the "ways and means" necessary to meet these votes.

This is the extent of parliamentary control over the cost of ruling Britannia, and it is now necessary to describe the general heads of our annual national expenditure.

First and foremost in the account is the charge for interest and management of the National Debt, and this amounts, in round numbers, to about twenty-six millions sterling. Those who are inclined to make the best of a bad bargain—and amongst them we must include Mr. Thomson Hankey—see in this debt of eight hundred millions a gratifying proof of the soundness of our credit, and not of the fatal facility which governments have of borrowing. Nothing is more easy than to pledge the earnings of posterity. This debt is eminently a fighting debt. It began with a sum of more than half a million at the Revolution of 1688, and increased to nearly thirteen millions during the reign of William the Third, under the title of the "King's Debt." At the accession of Queen Anne it was called the "National Debt," and it increased during her reign to thirty-six millions. George the First received it at this amount, and passed it on to George the Second as more than fifty-two millions; George the Second passed it on to George the Third as one hundred and two millions; and George the Third, owing to the American War of Independence and the French revolutionary war, with subsidies and aids to European powers, found it one hundred and two and left it eight hundred and thirty-five millions. George the Fourth—"the finest gentleman of Europe"—passed it on to William the Fourth as seven hundred and eighty-five millions—decreased fifty millions—and William the Fourth passed it on to Queen Victoria as nearly seven hundred and eighty-eight millions. In Queen Victoria's reign, up to the close of March, 1863, the debt has been increased by a little more than twelve millions. The interest which has been paid on this debt from 1691 to 1863 (inclusive) has amounted to more than two thousand two hundred and thirty-six millions sterling. The debt is chiefly a funded or book debt, and is managed by the Bank of England—the earliest creditors of the country—at an annual charge of about two hundred and one thousand pounds.

The next item in the account is for various charges on the Consolidated Fund, of a permanent nature, amounting to one million and eight hundred and eighty-four thousand pounds. More than four hundred and five thousand pounds of this sum is apportioned for the Civil List and pensions granted by the Crown. This is a national grant, in place of all the former hereditary income of the Crown, which is divided into six classes, and any surplus from one class cannot be taken to supply a deficiency in the other. For this reason, a prudent monarch is compelled to be economical, and not to pay fancy prices for Windsor Castle Theatricals, or works of promising young artists. If we add to this sum about forty-three thousand pounds for the repairs and maintenance of the royal palaces, and one hundred and two thousand pounds which is paid to the other members of the royal family, we shall find that it requires about five hundred and fifty thousand pounds every year to support the dignity of the Crown and of the royal family.

The next item to the Civil List is one of about two hundred and seventy-four thousand pounds for annuities and pensions. This list includes kings, heroes, and ex-ministers of a certain standing, and one reverend gentleman who, as ex-Hanaper-keeper, and ex-patentee (not inventor) of bankrupts, receives eleven thousand three hundred and eighty pounds, or nearly three times as much as the son of the Duke of Wellington.

Next come salaries and allowances, more than one hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds; then diplomatic salaries and pensions, more than one hundred and seventy-one thousand pounds, and then a charge of more than six hundred and ninety thousand pounds for courts of justice. This is made up of salaries to judges and compensations, owing to reforms in the administration of justice, and the large round sum we have given, excludes a few odd pounds, and a mysterious sixpence.

A group of "miscellaneous charges" follow, which includes Russian-Dutch Loan and Greek Loan (both war charges), Annuity to Greenwich Hospital, and sums devoted to the improvement of harbours in the Isle of Man (one-ninth of the revenue received from customs in that island), ten thousand pounds devoted to "secret service," which is only part of the sum annually placed at the disposal of the Crown to be used in this way, and between sixteen and seventeen thousand pounds paid to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, as Duke of Cornwall, to compensate him for loss of duties on tin.

These sums, with the interest on the National Debt, together amount to something over twenty-eight millions, and are commonly called the charges on the Consolidated Fund. They have been created by general Acts of Parliament, and are not, therefore, necessarily brought under the annual consideration of the House of Commons.

The remainder of the annual charges for ruling Britannia amounts to something over forty-one millions, and this sum is subject to the annual control of Parliament in the votes given in what is called Committee of Supply. The first two of these charges—about sixteen millions and a quarter, and nearly eleven millions and a half—are for the army and navy, the total being nearly twenty-eight millions. Ten years ago our fighting expenditure was only sixteen millions, but the Russian war raised it to a level from which it shows no symptoms of sinking. We get for this outlay about one hundred and fifty thousand effective men of all ranks in our army, and about seventy-six thousand men in our navy, with one hundred and fifty vessels of war in commission.

The next item in the account of expendi-

ture is for Miscellaneous Civil Service, and this amounts to about eight millions. These charges are divided in the votes of the House of Commons into seven general divisions, such as public works (a bricklayers', plasterers', and gardeners' division); salaries, out of which are paid all the public officers of the thirty-six public offices, except those provided for in the Consolidated Fund, and the clerks in the War-offices and Admiralty; law and justice, which absorb about three millions and a half; education, which absorbs nearly a million and a half; colonial charges, superannuations and retiring allowance, and miscellaneous charges. We then come to the cost of collecting the public revenue. This was formerly deducted from the income received by the revenue departments, and consequently no annual estimate was ever submitted to Parliament to show at what cost the public revenue was collected. A change, however, and a very important one, was made chiefly in 1854, since which the whole of the expenditure has been brought before Parliament, and annually voted in Committee of Supply. The total cost of the three departments — customs, inland revenue (excise), and post-offices — and land revenues and superannuations—is about five millions and a half. The number of clerks and others employed by the customs is about five thousand three hundred, with an average salary of about one hundred and forty pounds; in the inland revenue, about five thousand, with an average salary of about one hundred and sixty pounds; and in the Post-office, about twenty-five thousand, with an average salary of about eighty pounds.

These sums, with a special vote of a million for fortifications, amount altogether to nearly seventy millions and a half, the cost of ruling Britannia for a twelvemonth; and we now have to examine the other side of the account, the income side.

The first great source of revenue is found in the customs duties—customs, many sound financiers think, that would be more honoured in the breach than in the observance. These duties produce about twenty-four millions—the chief sums being about six millions and a half drawn from sugar and its varieties; nearly six millions drawn from tobacco and snuff; five millions and a half drawn from tea, and nearly three millions drawn from spirits. The other heads of customs revenue are wine, corn, coffee, fruits, wood, and timber (a protective duty), pepper, and a few other articles. Our tariff about twenty years ago contained about one thousand articles which were forbidden to sail in untaxed, but now the tariff contains only fifty-one articles so taxed. Even with this great reform, however, it is far from being perfect, and those who believe that we enjoy free trade in corn, will be surprised to hear that an annual million sterling is still drawn from this staple article of food.

Next come the duties collected by the inland revenue department. These are divided into excise, stamps, land and general taxes, and income and property tax. The excise duties are levied principally on two articles, spirits and malt, the first producing nearly nine millions and a half, and the second nearly five millions and a half. The other divisions are licenses, railways, stage-carriages, game certificates, hackney-carriages, and sundries. The taxes on railways and carriages are all bad, being checks upon the free circulation of goods and men.

The Stamp Duties are collected from legacies and successions (a tax upon capital and not upon income), from fire and marine insurances (a tax upon prudence), from probates of wills, deeds, bills of exchange, penny stamps on cheques, &c., producing altogether about nine millions.

The first item under the head of taxes—officially so called—is the Land-Tax, the oldest impost in England, which produces about one million. It is based on a valuation made in 1695, which no one supposes can represent the value at the present time, but any attempt to rearrange this tax so as to produce more money would be nothing less than confiscation. The Assessed Taxes are raised on inhabited houses, male servants, carriages, horses, mules, and dogs, hair-powder, and armorial bearings. They produce about two millions every year.

Next comes the Income and Property Tax—a very direct tax—first invented or applied in England by Mr. Pitt, and successively repealed and reimposed by many Chancellors of the Exchequer. Of all the various modes of Sucking Britannia, this is the one which is the least popular, both with financiers and the public. If all the income sucked from Britannia were to be sucked in this way, Britannia would have to be ruled, as she was thirty years ago, at half the present cost. This prospect appears so awful, that the tax is not popular with tax-makers. The public dislike the impost because it is a direct stand-and-deliver tax, and prefer to be quietly bled to death by the indirect operations of Customs and Excise. The Income Tax now produces about ten millions and a half.

Next is the income derived from the Post-office. The gross produce of this department for letter-carrying and banking is about three millions and eight hundred thousand pounds; and the total expenditure in carriage of mails, buildings, postage-stamps, salaries, &c. (about three millions), being deducted from this, leaves a profit of about eight hundred thousand pounds. This is a nice sum for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to receive for the use of the country; but it can only be looked upon as a tax upon the free circulation of thought. Such a tax, no matter how collected, is bad in principle, and can hardly be good for the country. The average number of letters now passing annually through the Post-office—irrespective of newspapers and parcels by book-post (seventy-one millions, and nearly twelve millions, respectively)—is quite twenty for each person throughout the kingdom; and the sooner the Post-office profits are spent in improving the Post-office service, or in reducing the postal

charges, the better for these active correspondents.

The next item is three hundred thousand pounds derived from Crown Lands—a class of property which is not very productive. The gross income from these lands is only about four hundred and thirty thousand pounds, and many quiet observers, including Mr. Hankey, are puzzled by this remarkable barrenness. There is a tradition, meandering through old law-books, which is painful to all taxpayers, that these Crown lands were once sufficient to pay all the expenses of the State, before a large number of royal prodigals took to running through the national property. William the Conqueror's income from this source, according to a reliable estimate, was equal, in our present money, to something like six or seven millions per annum, without taking into consideration the increased value of property. Now the forests—the anything but merry green woods, and part of this property—cost more than they produce, showing an annual loss of seven thousand pounds. If this was the case in Robin Hood's time, no wonder his Chancellor of the Exchequer set the practice of thieving.

The last items on our list are the miscellaneous receipts, a group that amounts to about two millions and three-quarters. Here we have small branches of the hereditary revenue (an insignificant sum): about one hundred and thirty thousand pounds paid by the Bank of England for the privilege of issuing bank-notes, or creating capital, to the extent of fourteen milllions; fees of public offices, a large proportion of which consists of charges on private bills (railway and public company bills), sufficient to pay all the working expenses of Parliament; a sum returned by the King of the Belgians out of his pension, seemingly to promote as much book-keeping as possible; and a receipt of seven hundred thousand pounds from the sale of old stores, which represents a loss of a million and a half, and an annual sop thrown to auction-room jobbers. These are followed by what are called extra receipts—a large part of which is the profit on coinage—more than sufficient to pay the whole cost of the Mint. The profit is made on the silver and copper coinage, and chiefly on the latter. Gold, being the standard coin, is manufactured free of charge, to keep it steady in value. Next, in these miscellaneous receipts, comes the profit made from those useful but not very lively government publications, the Gazettes of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin; then follow the repayments from India for military charges; the colonial contribution towards the cost of our Post-office services (which we have before taken into account); the unclaimed wages and effects of deceased merchant seamen, which are paid into the Exchequer after six years; a saving on the issue of parliamentary grants, paid back in cash; ten thousand pounds received from the public as "conscience money"—partly from people who think they have defrauded the revenue, and partly from enthusiasts who wish to pay off the National Debt; a surplus remaining unappropriated from former votes of supply; and sums derived from the Malta and Alexandria telegraph contractors, the Emperor of China, in the shape of an indemnity; and from the capture of slavers, and other sources. These sums end the miscellaneous receipts, and when the whole account is added up, we find that the result of Sucking Britannia—the total income from revenue of all kinds—is a little more than seventy millions and a half. The total amount received from taxation, exclusive of the Post-office, is about sixty-seven millions, and the cost of collection, excluding the Post-office, but including superannuations, is about two millions and a half, or three and three-quarters per cent, as they say in the City.

This simple account of Ruling and Sucking Britannia only gives the pure income and expenditure of the national balance-sheet, leaving out certain items which always appear in the official statement. These items, on both sides, generally reach another eighteen millions, and represent certain financial operations of the government. There are the balances standing to the credit of the government at the commencement of the financial year—the 1st of April, or All Fools' Day—the money borrowed from the Bank of England by the government, under parliamentary restrictions, and partly repaid during the year; the temporary advances so borrowed and wholly repaid every quarter; and the creation or redemption of additional debt. The last item may be interesting to those who wish to watch the progress of the National Debt. The repayments of advances that are not temporary, includes an operation by which the silver and copper coin finds its way into circulation. The Mint buys copper and silver, and coins both, as before stated, at a profit, but the coin is only issued to the Bank of England, or to other parties willing to give the full nominal value for it, because they require the small coinage of silver and copper for the wants of their customers. Only those persons who require the coin for such purposes would give twenty shillings' worth of gold to receive only eighteen shillings intrinsic value in silver, or probably not above seven or eight shillings intrinsic value in copper.

One of the cleverest inventions to conceal the real pressure of taxation was the so-much-a-head theory. When financial reformers complain that the active expenditure of the country has increased sixfold during the last seventy years, they are referred to the population returns, and told that seventy millions a year, drawn from thirty millions of people, is only about two pounds five shillings a head. If taxes were paid to Chancellors by sucking babes, idiots, paupers, and a number of other similar persons, there would be some fairness in this poll-tax calculation, but the chief heads in the country who pay these seventy millions a year are heads of families. If Britannia really believes in this head theory, with how much disgust must she regard those constantly occurring cases of death from starvation which

are a disgrace to the country? It would surely be better to give up a little of our great and glorious expenditure, than to support it by squeezing five-and-forty shillings a year from those who are dying of hunger.

OUR LITTLE FRIENDS.

We may not be accustomed to hear grubs and animalcules called domestic animals. But, asks Doctor T. L. Phipson, "do we not rear our silkworms with as much care as our sheep or our cows? Do we not construct houses for our bees, cochineals, snails, oysters, as we do for our rabbits, our chickens, or our horses? Are not large fortunes realised by the cultivation of a worm such as the leech, or a grub such as the silkworm, as readily as by the aid of the camel of the desert, or the Indian elephant? Have we not seen a thimbleful of some new insect or its eggs fetch as high a price in the market as the choicest Cochin-China fowl?"

We always ought to cultivate our friends, and that these little friends, which are remarkably well worth cultivating, are not cultivated half enough, and how much we lose by our neglect, Dr. Phipson suggests in a little book on the Utilisation of Minute Life, designed to improve our acquaintance with our smallest fellow-creatures. A man is likely to thrive if he can discover "a means of doubling the produce of the bee or the silkworm, or a method by which sponges and corals might be cultivated with as much ease as a lettuce or a cauliflower." So says Dr. Phipson, and what sort of information it is that he wishes to diffuse, his book enables us to show. He includes in his register crustacea, molluscs, worms, polyps, infusoria, sponges. We content ourselves with notes on our friends of the insect world.

There are more kinds of silkworm than the mulberry-worm common in Europe, which spins at the rate of six inches a minute, and in Lyons spins six million million feet of silk every year. Fifteen hundred English feet is the average length of one cocoon; the average crop from one ounce weight of eggs is eighty pounds weight of cocoon, and one pound weight of the cocoon will yield an ounce of eggs, but the harvest is sometimes greater. The ounce of egg, or seed, has been known to make one hundred and thirty pounds of cocoon.

In India, use has been made of a Tussah silkworm which feeds on the leaves of the jujube-tree, but will eat other leaves, and has even been reared experimentally on oak-leaves, a fact encouraging to those who propose its introduction into Europe. Its silk is much coarser than that of the common silkworm, and of a darker colour. It clothes one hundred and twenty millions of Asiatics, and clothes made of it will last, for constant use, ten or eleven years. Another Asiatic moth yielding this kind of silk will feed also on oak. Its eggs have been known to hatch in Siberia before there were leaves on the oak-tree, and the larvæ have then been saved from starving by oak-branches placed in vessels of water to force the buds to open quickly. The Oriady silkworm, discovered in Bengal, feeds on the castor-oil plant, and yields soft and glossy silk that cannot be wound off the cocoon. It is woven, therefore, into a coarse loose textured fabric used for clothing and for packing costly goods. It is so durable that a garment of it cannot be worn out during a man's lifetime.

Can the silkworms be made to produce their goods ready dyed? The solution of this question has been attempted by sprinkling over the mulberry leaves on which the worms feed such innocent colouring matter as indigo, or the fine red dye of a Bignonia called chica, wherewith the Indians of Oronoco dye their skin. M. Roulin is the great French experimenter in this way. He is still at work, but hitherto, though he has been able to get dyed silk, he has not been able to get it well dyed.

There is a clothes moth called the Pinea padilla, of which each larva spins about half a square inch of fine silk, and a great number of these larvæ being set to work on the surface of a paper model, the parts which they were not to cover with silk being oiled, Mr. Habenstreet has caused the clothes moth to produce an air balloon about four feet high; one or two shawls, and a complete seamless dress with sleeves, not only the material, but the dress itself being made by the clothes moth. The Queen of Bavaria is said once to have worn such a robe of gauzy silk over her court costume. It is light to a fault, for the slightest breath of wind is enough to carry a whole dress away. Dresses have been made of silk from the yellow cocoon of a Paraguay spider. A peculiar white silk is yielded by the Ichneumon fly of the West Indies, but no use has yet been made of it.

The silk dress that one insect makes, another can dye magnificently. The insect called kermes or chermes, nearly related to the cochineal, and used for dyeing before cochineal was known, gives its name to the colour that the French call cramoisi and the English crimson. In the middle ages the insect was supposed to be produced from a worm, and was described as vermiculatum, whence comes the name in French of vermeil and in English of vermilion. Kermes is found in many parts of Asia, and in the south of Europe, and is very common in the south of France, where it lives on a small evergreen oak. Another kind of it, known also before the cochineal or coccus of the cactus, is common in Poland and Russia, and has been an important article of commerce under the name of the "scarlet grain of Poland." It is found in England on the roots of the perennial knarvel, a plant not uncommon in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Our cochineal was found to be already in use in its native Mexico when, early in the sixteenth century, the Spaniards arrived there; but for a hundred years men were not sure whether it was an insect or a seed. The cactus on which it is usually bred is called the nopal, whence the plantations are known as nopaleries, and the chief part of the cochineal

of commerce is produced from small nopaleries belonging to Indians who are very poor. These people establish their nopal plantations on cleared ground, on the mountain-slopes, two or three leagues from their villages. Each planter buys stock in the spring in the shape of a few branches of cactus laden with small cochineals recently hatched, known as semilla, or seeds. Such branches are sold for about half-a-crown the hundred. They are kept for twenty days within the huts, then placed in the open air under a shed, and in August and September, the succulency of the plant having kept life in the cactus branches, the female insects, big with young, are gathered and strewed on the nopals to breed. In about four months the first gathering is made, of a twelvefold increase, and there may be two more profitable harvests in the course of the year. The cochineal has to be gathered from the nopal with great care; the Indian women squat, therefore, for hours before a single cactus, brushing at the insects with a squirrel's tail. They are killed by boiling water, by exposure in heaps to the sun, or by drying in ovens. It takes seventy thousand of the dried insects to make a pound of cochineal, and England alone consumes one hundred and fifty thousand pounds of cochineal, or ten thousand and five hundred millions of insects. Cochineal, still produced most abundantly in Mexico, is now cultivated also in Spain, India, Algiers, &c. In Teneriffe it has superseded the grape vine. The cochineal grower must carefully avoid mixing different species of coccus, and after a gathering his plants must be carefully washed with a sponge before they are strewn again with mother insects.

M. Guérin Menneville lately discovered in the south of France, upon the bean, an indigenous cochineal of which the colouring matter is a peculiar scarlet, usually obtainable by none but artificial means. It is not a carmine, and as every true coccus yields carminium, this newly-discovered insect is probably not a true cochineal, but an aphis, of which the dye is said to have decided advantages over cochineal in dyeing wool, if it could be multiplied so as to be cheap and abundant.

Lac, formerly supposed to be formed by the Coccus lacca as bees form their cells, is now said to consist of five sorts of resin mixed with a little wax, colouring matter, and grease, exuding from the jujube and other trees after this coccus has pricked them. The colouring matter being carminium — the principle of the cochineal—that certainly is communicated to it by the coccus. Carminium mixed with alumina produces the magnificent lake known to the artist as carmine; it is deposited on adding alum to an alkaline solution of cochineal; but it is a singular fact, that if this be done in the dark the carmine will be far less brilliant than if it be prepared in the sunshine. The only rouge that can be used by actors on the stage—or off it—without injury to health, is that produced by a mixture of an ounce of freshly prepared carmine with a quarter of a pound of chalk.

We pass over the fly (cynips) that produces gall-nuts with only a couple of notes. The gall-nut, however large, attains its full size in a day or two, and it is remarkable that the grub in it, surrounded by a vegetable tumour that contains no particle of grease or oily matter, becomes distinguished for its fat. It turns the starch or other vegetable matter on which it feeds into fat in a way that deserves the observation of Mr. Banting; for, says Dr. Phipson, "the conditions under which fat is most readily formed are indeed those in which the larvæ of the cynips live, namely, a vegetable or farinaceous diet, repose, solitude, and obscurity."

An aphis in some parts of Asia produces galls that are used as a crimson dye for silk; a yellow dye seems to be procurable from the gall-nut formed at the extremities of the spruce fir by the aphis pini; and the best yellow of India is produced from a sort of gall.

There is a Chinese coccus that produces from the trees it inhabits tumours as large as a walnut, of a wax-like spermaceti. It begins to appear about June, and is gathered at the beginning of September. In China alone (where it is chiefly cultivated in the province of Xantung) this insect thus produces wax enough for the wants of the whole nation. It is reared also from the frontiers of Thibet to the Pacific Ocean. France pays four millions of francs a year for wax. This coccus alone produces in a year wax to the value of ten millions of francs, so that we do not now depend, as we used to depend, wholly on the wax of bees.

As to the bees and their wax they do not obtain it at all—as they do their honey—from the vegetable world, but secrete it themselves in thin plates, from special organs on each side of the abdomen. There is a wild bee of Ceylon that, though it makes much honey, is itself barbarously eaten as a delicacy. Elsewhere all the world over the bee is honoured as a liberal friend of man. In the Ukraine some of the peasants make more profit from their bees than from their corn. There are varieties of honey yielded by varieties of bee, and there are varieties of honey yielded by our own familiar honey-bee, who suits his taste to his country, and in the Highlands of Scotland prefers gathering honey from the heather, in Scania from the buckwheat, in Poland from the lime-trees, in Corsica from the arbutus, in Narbonne from the rosemary, and in Greece from the thyme.

It is no longer thought necessary to kill bees to get at their honey. They may be "chloroformed" by the smoke of the puff-ball fungus; but Mr. Nutt's system of hive makes even this unnecessary. Great care and attention is necessary to successful bee-keeping. Near Paris the average clear profit from each beehive varies from ten shillings to a pound a year. The chief losses occur in the winter. M. Antoine of Rheims has lately been teaching that the best way to winter the hives is to bury them, with the utmost care and with the least possible motion and noise, in a pretty deep trench dug about the middle of November, their sides protected with

boards and straw, and the whole covered with earth, on which seeds are sown to hide the buried treasure. The trench is opened in the middle of the following February—in the evening—with the same precaution against every avoidable stir and noise. It is said that in hives thus treated, the bees consume three-fifths less honey than when they are not buried; there is almost no mortality, and the queen begins to lay three weeks sooner than usual.

Honey can be made of wood, linen, cotton, or starch, by boiling them for ten or twenty hours in water acidulated with sulphuric acid, and replacing the water as it evaporates. If the acid liquid be then saturated with chalk, filtered and evaporated, the result is artificial honey, composed, like honey itself, of grape sugar mixed with a little liquid sugar. So says the chemist, but no busy bee among our prudent housekeepers has yet tried to gather honey from her linen and cotton rags.

Manna is got from the sap of the ash-tree by the puncture of an insect of the cochineal family, and it is produced also from other trees. A sweet substance, like manna, exudes from the leaves of an Australian tree—the Eucalyptus gesinifera—dries in the sun, and, when the trees are shaken by the wind, falls like a shower of snow. The manna of Mount Sinai is drawn from the tamarisk by puncture of the coccus. It exudes as a thick syrup during the heat of the day, falls in drops, congeals during the night, and is gathered in the cool of the morning.

Then we have a little friend in sickness, to whom we are not always grateful while he is serving us, in the cantharides, or Spanish fly. He is rare in England, but is found now and then in the southern counties on the lilac, privet, and some other shrubs. In Spain he is common, and in Italy, and other southern lands. In some parts of France, especially Poitou, ash-trees are never planted, because the quantity of cantharides that breed on them become a nuisance to the inhabitants of the district. Other beetles, as the oil beetle, and the golden beetle, have inflammatory power, and it is said to be by virtue of this that a live ladybird imprisoned in a hollow aching tooth will cure the most violent toothache.

In Africa they eat ants stewed in butter. In Sweden they distil them with rye to give a peculiar flavour to brandy. Pressed ant-eggs yield a mixture resembling chocolate with milk, of which the chemical composition really resembles that of ordinary milk. The large termites, or white ants, which are so destructive to houses and furniture, are roasted by the Africans in iron pots, and eaten by handfuls as sugar-plums. They are said to be very nourishing, and to taste like sugared cream or sweet almond paste. As for locusts, "the Africans," says Dr. Phipson, "far from dreading their invasions, look upon a dense cloud of locusts as we should so much bread-and-butter in the air. They smoke them, or boil them, or salt them, or stew them, or grind them down as corn, and get fat upon them." An inch-long spider is roasted over the fire and relished as a tit-bit by the natives of New Caledonia. The eggs of a sort of boat-fly are found strewed by thousands on the reeds on the banks of the great fresh-water lakes Texcoco and Chalco. The Mexicans shake them into a cloth, set them to dry, then grind them like flour, and sell the flour in sacks for making a peculiar kind of cake called haulté. The unground eggs are used also for feeding chickens.

THE CALL IN VAIN.

I.

Call back the dew
That on the rose at morn was lying:
When the day is dying,
Bid the sunbeam stay:

Call back the wave
E'en while the ebbing tide's receding—
Oh, all unheeding
Of thy voice are they.

As vain the call
Distraction makes on love departed,
When the broken-hearted
Bitter tears let fall:

Dew and sunshine, wave and flow'r
Renew'd, return at destin'd hour,
But never yet was known the pow'r
Could vanish'd love recal.

II.

Call back the brave
Beneath the distant billow lying;
Bid those who love them, sighing,
For them cease to sigh.

Call back the bird
That, seeking warmer climes for pleasure
(Spent is *our* summer treasure),
Spreads his wing to fly.

Call back the dream
That in the night our fancy chaining,
With our slumber waning,
Melts at dawn away:—

Ah! no call like this succeeding,
Cease with dying love thy pleading,
Know, too late, with bosom bleeding,
Love is more lost than they!

HAPPY IDIOTS.

The dream of the monks and hospitallers of old has been realised—alms-giving has become an art, indeed, it may be said, a fine art. Among all the institutions of the country there are none so well organised, so liberally conducted, or so carefully and thoughtfully adapted to their purpose, as those which are designed to relieve the sufferings and mitigate the misfortunes of humanity. Here in England there is scarcely a disease either of the mind or body, scarcely even a deformity, for whose alleviation some hospital has not been provided by the inexhaustible charity of the people. And our hospitals

and asylums vie in architectural magnificence with the mansions of the rich and great. When the intelligent foreigner is making his way towards London by the South Eastern Railway, and sees on every side magnificent buildings rising majestically from woods and gardens rich in stately timber, and glowing with rare plants and flowers, he is apt to inquire the names of the great English milords who own those splendid seats. This Italian palace on the left, with the British flag floating proudly from its summit. Surely this must be the residence of a royal prince?

No, monsieur, it is the residence of some two or three hundred poor creatures who are suffering from incurable diseases. It is an hospital—this mansion on the right with broad terraces, sparkling fountains, and velvet lawns. The ancestral seat of a duke? No, it is but an asylum for idiots. By-and-by a bright château rising from among the rich dark woods—a home for orphan children. Anon, a castle of glittering granite, surrounded by trim grounds and highly cultivated fields. The stronghold of a proud English baron, of all the barons, perhaps, come down from Magna Charta and taken up house together? Nay, a reformatory for criminal children, distinguished inheritors of evil ways and vicious habits. The intelligent foreigner may well listen in mute astonishment. The reflections which arise even in the mind of a native are perplexing enough. Down by the sides of the railway, on the brink of ditches and stagnant pools, away in the open fields among reeking brick-fields and festering manure-heaps, huddled together in damp and muddy villages, and by-and-by in the pent and stifling streets of the murky city, he sees the homes of the honest hard-working poor—homes that are but pigsties in comparison with the magnificent hospitals and asylums which British charity has raised for the idiot, the lunatic, and the criminal.

At first sight the contrast presents itself as a strange anomaly. It would almost seem that, in this country, to be unfortunate is to be fortunate, to be poor is to be rich; that, for the advantage of physical comfort, it is better to be mad than sane; better to be an idiot than to have the full use of one's faculties; better to be a youthful criminal than an honest, hard-working, well-behaved boy. And, indeed, it is not too much to say that these lunatics, idiots, and young criminals, are the only persons in the whole community who are enabled fully to enjoy the comfort, the cleanliness, the wholesome diet, and the regularity of habits which make up the great and sovereign recipe, according to all wisdom and experience, for ensuring health and the capability for happiness.

These reflections, and many others in the same strain, arose in my mind with irresistible force the other day, when I paid a visit to the Idiot Asylum at Earlswood. Driving down from the Reigate station in a handsomely appointed carriage that I found waiting for me, I conceived the idea that I was proceeding on a visit to some wealthy landowner. This idea was further increased and strengthened, when, after a rapid, dashing drive of twenty minutes or so, the carriage turned sharply through an archway, and entered the gates of a large and beautiful mansion, situated on a commanding elevation, overlooking broad terraces with flights of stone steps, leading down to the green lawns, studded with shrubs and trees and intersected by parterres of many-coloured flowers. Still dwelling upon the idea of the landowner, it occurred to me that my host could be nothing less than a duke. Nor did I quite lose this impression when I noticed some hundreds of men, women, and children, many of them obviously of the poorer class, disporting themselves on the grass, or marching in procession, preceded by a band of music. No doubt his grace the duke was giving a fête to his tenants and humble dependents. It was, indeed, some considerable time before I entirely lost sight of the noble and princely proprietor. There he was with the duchess at his side, on the steps of the grand entrance waiting to receive me; and when he had condescendingly given me his august hand, and kindly introduced me to the duchess, he handed me over to the major-domo, a magnificent and imposing personage, six feet two in his stockings, who forthwith conducted me to the banqueting-hall. Here, in a delightfully cool apartment, large and lofty, with a triple window of great plate-glass panes, looking out upon the beautiful garden, and a wide extent of richly wooded country, I enjoy a substantial, but at the same time an elegant repast, while a neat-handed, soft-footed nymph in white garments stands behind my chair and waits upon me, wafting upon my sense, as she passes to and from the sideboard, a gentle breeze, redolent of clean frock. At home in my own house—it may be in Belgrave-square—I have viands richer than these; I have a finer carpet, as white a tablecloth, as attentive a servitor; but I have not this light, this air, this odour of cleanness, this palpable scent of pure country health. I imagine that it must be his grace the duke's best room; his company room, his grand salon de réception. But, as I pass down the corridor, on my way to the grounds, I notice many such rooms, all large, light, airy, clean and cheerful. Happy idiots!

Descending from the noble terrace by a flight of stone steps, I come upon the whole of the inmates of the Asylum, disporting themselves upon the lawn. They number in all three hundred and sixty-five, two hundred and sixty being males, and one hundred and five females. They are of all ages, ranging from a grey-haired old lady of sixty, to a child of five years; and of all ranks, from the sons of prosperous merchants, it may be noblemen, down to the children of poor clerks and petty tradespeople. The Asylum at Earlswood is not absolutely a charity. All who can afford it, pay for their maintenance, and in some instances pay handsomely. Those who cannot afford to pay are elected by the votes of

the subscribers, and are maintained gratuitously. The receipts of the Asylum are thus, to a certain extent, a common fund for the support of all the inmates; although those who maintain themselves receive special advantages according to the amount of their payments. But none of the inmates, however poor they may be, are deprived of any of the essentials of comfort. A patient who pays a hundred or a hundred and fifty pounds a year may have a separate apartment and an attendant entirely to himself; but as regards the necessaries and comforts essential to health and enjoyment of life, the rich and the poor are on the same footing.

I fully expected that the sight of so many idiotic creatures in a body would be exceedingly painful. It certainly was painful; but far less so than I could possibly have imagined. Contrary to my anticipation they were all clean, and neat, and tidy in their dress. Moreover, the majority of them exhibited an activity of body and a cheerfulness of expression which I had never before witnessed in persons so manifestly deficient in mental power. This deficiency was strongly marked in every face. The manifestations are very similar in all cases,—a deformed head or jaw, a wide loose mouth showing the gums, large irregular teeth, a fixed stare, and an imbecile smile that comes and goes in a mechanical manner. These peculiarities told plainly that the persons I saw before me were idiotic; but their manner and bearing conveyed no idea of their being useless and helpless.

The kindly system of the institution had done its work. Many of these poor creatures, when they were first brought to Earlswood, were in a condition inferior almost to the brutes. They were confirmed in filthy habits; they were at times perfectly torpid and completely insensible. All the gates of their understanding were as firmly locked as if they had been sealed by the hand of death. They had ears and could not hear; eyes and could not see; tongues and could not speak. And now, here on this lawn, were these self-same creatures, all more or less awakened to life and understanding, running and leaping, laughing and chatting, asking and answering questions, and contending with each other in a high spirit of emulation in all kinds of games, while the workshops, the garden, and the farm offered a hundred specimens of their work in almost every department of art and industry.

The Rev. Edwin Sidney, a benevolent clergyman, who takes a deep interest in this institution, and who is one of its chief benefactors, has given a most interesting account, from observations made at various periods since the year 1859, of the working of the system, and of the progress made by the various inmates. In the course of his visits, Mr. Sidney has been enabled to watch the treatment of idiots from the first day of their admission into the asylum until, in some instances, they have been rendered fit to mix in society. The system pursued by Dr. Down, the resident physician and superintendent, resembles, in some degree, the graduated process by which the raw produce of nature is slowly and patiently converted into works of arts and usefulness—with this difference, that the human raw material is never treated roughly, but always tenderly and gently.

On the reception of a pupil, the first step is to inquire from friends the history of the case, and to discover the peculiar predilections and repugnances of the individual. Certain objective facts, as weight, height, shape, condition of the organs of sense, and powers of prehension and locomotion, are carefully registered. Then follow personal observation and comparison of habits and propensities with the accounts received from friends. These are the data for treatment, and instructions in accordance with them are given to the attendant or nurse. The first efforts are directed to the eradication of bad habits, such as tearing the clothes and wallowing in the dirt. After this, if there exist sufficient power, the pupil has proposed to him, occupations: such as unravelling cocoa fibre for matting, splitting rods for baskets, and the result of his labour, whatever it may be, is always received with praise instead of blame.

When the pupil is indolent, morose, or stubborn, the example of good fellow-pupils is tried, and the imitation of their conduct is encouraged. If he prove incapable from low physical power, the physician's skill is exercised on diet, attention to the condition of the skin, and due medical treatment. The physical state is held to be of the greatest importance, and the appliance of gymnastic exercises is regulated by it. These exercises are first to the upper extremities, and then to the lower and the trunk, and the lessons are enlivened by music.

From the examination of many hundred cases, Dr. Down has found that a malformation of the mouth and the palate is a physical characteristic of nearly all idiots. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of them are mute, semi-mute, or indistinct in utterance. But even the worst of such cases are successfully treated at Earlswood. The method pursued is curious. For example, if the sounds to be caught were those of the letter T, the teacher would first hold up a *top*, which the pupils are made to name collectively; then a *letter*, and lastly a *pot*. In the same manner for D, he would show pictures of a *dog*, a *ladder*, and some object coloured *red*. Hence, when a learner can name every object in the collection, he is able to utter the required words correctly. The result has been that many who could scarcely articulate a sound, can now speak intelligibly and with tolerable correctness. Pictures play an important part in conveying ideas to the pupils, and many of them have learned all they know from pictures. Some of them, who are incapable of reading and writing, have become expert draughtsmen, as may be seen from various specimens of their artistic works which adorn the walls of the Asylum.

Another ingenious mode of conveying instruction, is by engaging the pupils in playing at shop-keeping. A counter is set out with various articles in daily use, at which a boy presides as shopkeeper, while the others come forward in turn and act as buyers. "It is most curious," says Mr. Sidney, "to see what a puzzle it often is to find the correct weight; when it is found, the class is well questioned upon it, and, indeed, on every other weight the shopman touches, before it is put into the scale. Then there is further perplexity in getting the correct quantity of the required substance, as, for instance, sugar, into the scale. When the quantity is large, they will often begin with little spoonfuls, and when, at last, the balance approaches, it is sometimes a thorough poser whether they are to remove some of the commodity or to add to it. All this causes a regular excitement till the due proportions are achieved; and then comes the moment of pay, which is one of great excitement, the whole class trying to check every step in the reckoning. Combinations of pence and halfpence are trying things to get over; and sometimes the purchaser who cannot calculate them uses cunning, and tries to pay with a silver coin, and asks for change, thus throwing his perplexities on the shopman."

The Asylum is at once a hospital, a school, and a workshop within; without, a gymnasium, a garden, and a farm. In the workshops the inmates practise tailoring, shoemaking, carpentering, mat-making, and the like. The clothes of the inmates and the attendants are nearly all made by imbeciles, who have learned their trades in the Asylum. They all take a great interest in their work, and are very proud of the results. Some of the lads act as cooks. On a visit to the kitchen, Mr. Sidney found twelve of the pupils, not one of whom, a year previously, could have been trusted near an oven or a fire, neatly dressed in white, helping the regular officials of the kitchen with the greatest order and zeal. One poor fellow acted as scullery-boy, and to show how completely his heart was in his humble occupation, on being asked which he liked best, Earlswood or the establishment where he had previously been, he answered, "O Earlswood great deal;" and on being further questioned "Why?" added, "Because we have a bigger sink." It should be observed, that the pupils are not forced to engage in occupations which they do not like. Each one is allowed to choose the employment for which he has a fancy. Some of them occupy themselves in drawing, and in making models and toys, simply for their own amusement. One of these, a youth of sixteen, has completed a most beautiful model of a frigate fully equipped and rigged with every rope, sail, and spar. The model is of considerable size, and is executed with marvellous neatness and skill. I was informed that the constructor had never seen a ship, and took his first notion from a picture on a pocket-handkerchief, being afterwards assisted by drawings in the Illustrated London News. In the progress of his work, he made a great discovery, namely, that boiling wood rendered it capable of being easily bent. He had never heard of this process, so that the discovery was really his own. With the permission of Dr. Down, this pupil took me to his room to show me the model. His articulation was so imperfect, and his vocabulary so limited, that I could scarcely understand a word he said. He was, I was assured, a true idiot, who could scarcely read or write; yet he could draw admirably, and had made this wonderful ship. Though he could measure well, as his work testified, he had no idea of figures, or of money. I asked him how much the ship had cost him. He said, "Three thousand pounds."

The girls' side of the Asylum comprises, besides the dining-hall and dormitories, a sewing school, and a play-room. In the school the girls are taught to read by the aid of large letters chalked on black boards; they are also employed in useful work; in the afternoon they are allowed to make the fancy articles which may be seen exhibited in the reception-room. In another apartment there is a baby class taught entirely by pictures. In these rooms are stands of flowers and ferns prettily arranged, rendering the place cheerful and attractive. Some of the girls have learned to read and write very well.

The farm, situated at the end of the garden, gives regular employment to twelve of the inmates, and in hay and harvest time brings others from the workshops, who profit greatly by the change. Strolling into the yard, I met one of the idiot farmers dressed in a smock-frock and a wideawake hat. He certainly did not look more idiotic than some farm servants, not supposed to be deficient in mental capacity, whom I had seen outside the Asylum gates. He took me to the cow-house and showed me the cows. There were twenty of them, all in good condition and well provided with straw, and over each stall their attendant had placed a label bearing the cow's name in highly ornamental text. The lad who accompanied me was a good farmer; but a perfect idiot. He could not count the pigs in a sty, though there were barely a dozen of them; but he was a most useful member of the establishment for all that. He spoke very imperfectly. I asked him if he were happy there. He said, "Yes, very happy, but no money." I asked him what he would do with money if he had any. He said, "Buy sweetstuff." A friend came to see him, and he gave the friend particular instructions to send him a seed cake. The farm supplies the establishment with the whole of the milk and butter consumed by the inmates of the Asylum.

Amusement enters largely into the system pursued by Dr. Down. Besides the daily sports on the lawn and in the gymnasium, a theatrical performance is given at Christmas, and a fête at Midsummer. The charade performances have proved highly successful in stimulating into lasting vigour several whom it had been previously impossible to rouse from idiotic de-

pression and apathy. The leading parts are sustained by inmates, assisted by the attendants; the scenery is painted by a youth who, though an excellent artist, is incapable of describing his work intelligibly, or of referring to it except in a jumble of incoherent words. All the woodwork is done by boys in the carpenter's shop. In all these amusements the pupils have the hearty assistance of Dr. Down and Mrs. Down, who are regarded by all in the establishment with the strongest affection. I saw many unmistakable evidences of the regard in which the doctor is held, during my visit. Wherever he appeared on the grounds, the boys and girls ran to him, to talk to him, to ask him questions, and to fondle him. The men and women attendants, too, seemed to be all favourites with the poor imbeciles. I observed no indication that any of them inspired fear. I saw one man humour a tiresome boy with the utmost patience for fully half an hour, and in the end he succeeded in diverting him from the absurd desire he wished to gratify. I do not know upon what principle the attendants are chosen, but I noticed that they were all "good looking," which suggests the theory that good looks and a kind disposition generally go together. The inmates all like the place. Some of them who have gone home for a few weeks have expressed a desire to return to Earlswood and their friend Dr. Down, before the expiration of their leave. One boy actually packed up and walked to the Asylum, saying he could not stay away from "home" any longer. Seeing how they were surrounded by every comfort, and indulged in every way, I could not feel surprised at this; but considering the labour and patience required of those who are employed to watch and tend them, I certainly was not prepared for the statement of one of the female attendants—that she was very happy at Earlswood, that she had been there three years, and that she should not like to go to another place.

It was on the fête-day that I visited Earlswood—a day long and anxiously looked forward to by all the inmates. The amusements on the lawn continued from one o'clock until dusk, consisting of cricket, croquet, Aunt Sally, racing and jumping matches, a performance of Punch and Judy, glees by the singing class, negro melodies by the Earlswood Troupe, and the ascent of a fire balloon. Under the influence of the emulation excited by the racing and jumping for prizes, ranging from a shilling to a penny, the idiotic expression vanished from the faces of the patients in a magical way. In several instances I found it difficult to say whether they were idiots or not. One lad achieved some astonishing feats in bar-jumping, trying again and again until he had accomplished his purpose. I was informed that this boy, when he first entered the Asylum, was incapable of any physical effort whatever. His energies, both mental and physical, had been roused chiefly by gymnastic exercises. In all the sports, I noticed that Dr. Down and the attendants joined on equal terms with the patients, and thus set them all perfectly at their ease. The only refractory subject was a fat boy, whose accomplishments consisted in standing on his head, and in the execution of a dance in frog fashion, which he was ready to perform any number of times on the slightest encouragement. The fat boy's idiosyncrasy was to be always out of humour and always grumbling. He was last in all the races, but would insist upon a prize; in the pole-climbing he had to be hoisted up on the shoulders of an attendant. When the attendant dropped him, he came forward to the doctor in a triumphant manner, and held out his hand for a prize. In all cases he had one. They were all extremely fond of money, but the amount was of no consequence. They were just as well pleased with a penny as with a shilling.

The results of the system pursued at Earlswood are very great, very astonishing. Are they desirable? Is it incumbent upon those who have the charge of idiots, to do their utmost to rouse their dormant faculties and restore the broken and defaced image to the likeness of Him who made it? If these questions are to be answered in the affirmative, to do anything less than is done at Earlswood would be to fail in a great and sacred duty. Dr. Down's system is purely one of kindness, and it was not long before I perceived that his uniform and scrupulous kindness, his minute attention to every case, his liberal employment of every means calculated to divert the mind and promote the health of the body, were the true causes of the great expense of which some persons have complained. There is no doubt that the inmates of Earlswood might be kept and maintained for considerably less money; but this could only be done by reducing the number of attendants, and the success attained, by dispensing with many sanitary precautions, by adopting mechanical restraints, and by otherwise limiting the comforts and enjoyments of the inmates. For example, I found in the grounds some twenty or thirty attendants going about among the patients, watching them without appearing to watch them, laughing and chatting, joining in the sports, and taking infinite pains to divert their minds from the particular notions which possess them. In the good old times, this was done by a third of the number of attendants; but then they saved labour and the money of the patrons by chaining the patients to their bedsteads, by strapping them to boards, and by beating them until they were insensible. A blow is a cheap and effective quieter, there is no doubt. Dirt, filth, and unwholesome food, are also cheap, but they are nasty too, and, I trust, wholly distasteful to the humane and Christian feeling of the times in which we live.

Relatively, the expenses at Earlswood may be larger than absolutely necessary, but I was quite convinced from what I saw, that the system pursued by Dr. Down could not be carried out without great liberality. The number of attendants; the various workshops, with all their fittings and appliances; the schools, the

play-rooms, the works of art and ornament, the organised entertainments, the cheerful gardens; are all necessary and essential to the subtle process by which these poor idiots are coaxed, and petted, and insensibly led into developing their latent faculties, and assuming, as near as possible, the attributes of useful and intelligent human beings. One item of expense may be reasonably objected to—that of the mere ornamental parts of such an edifice. It surely can never be necessary to burden a charitable institution with an enormous rent in the form of interest of capital, or an incubus in the much more depressing form of a heavy building debt.

FETISHES.

What is a fetish? Generally a bundle of rags, a mass of rubbish, and a muttered charm; sometimes a tree, a stone, a bird, or a beast, or it may be a filthy insect, or it may be a mere place. Out of these materials the poor benighted savages, on whom we spend millions to bring them to a clearer sense of truth, make a something which thenceforth rules their lives and determines their actions—a dread, a power, a forbidding influence, an incorporate denial to human wish and need, a shadowy scourge held over all their life. A fetish is a bugbear; and a bugbear is a moral spectre, miserably thin but tremendously strong—a vampire; which is a ghost that will not lie quietly with the dead body, but wanders abroad, viewless and intangible, to feed on the living juices of healthy men.

Now, it is all very well to spend millions on the African savages for the purpose of inducing them to despise their fetishes, and to go about their forests and villages like reasonable men, without starting or stumbling over their own rag dolls, but I should like to know in what are we so very much their superiors? We laugh at their fetishes, but are our own much better? Analyse them, and I think we shall come to rags, rubbish, a muttered charm of words, a special place, a few bones and stones and splinters of wood, as making up the most of them; sometimes to beasts and insects as well—at least in symbol—for the British lion is a hustings and fine-writing fetish to this day; the Gallic cock, the French eagle, and the Napoleonic bee, express, each of them, a different fetish to the French mind; and "the bird of Freedom, that makes its home in the setting sun," is a symbolic fetish to Cousin Jonathan, which not the bravest dare insult, or say to its face what a miserable cheat and impostor it is. Let us, however, lift up the skirts of a few of our own rag and rubbish fetishes, and leave other people's alone. Throwing stones when we live in glass houses is neither a wise nor profitable employment, and is rather apt to lead to what old writers used to call "a bloody cock's-comb," in nine cases out of ten well deserved.

And first, there is the law, with its silk gowns and its stuff ones, its horsehair wigs and cabalistic spells, its javelin-men, and its wonderful distinction of persons administering; and if all this be not fetishism—the fetishism of adherence to an obsolete past—I should like to know what is. Why should a respectable old gentleman be smothered in a huge mass of powdered Charles the Second big-curled horse-tail, which makes his poor old head ache and his poor old eyes dim and feverish, because it was the fashion generations ago? Why should he be huddled up in a dense cloud of silk and ermine in the dog-days, when he is already swathed in the conventional garments of broadcloth and fine linen, which most gentlemen find quite sufficient for daily wear? Why should fine handsome personable men, with Brutus crops and coal-black whiskers, make themselves frights in funny little wigs with tails and a bow at the back, and a bald patch on the top commemorative of the tonsure? And why should they look like maniacs who had borrowed their wives' cloaks, with their coat-tails depending below their loosely flapping gowns? Why should all this be if we were not savages at heart, and afraid of our own stupid fetishes at Westminster? People say that the majesty of the law demands this rag-dollism; also that it demands the muttered charm which constitutes an oath, and after which a falsehood becomes quite a different thing to what it was before. (It was only a sin before, now it is a crime; and the two things are as different as the grub and the fly in the scale of social morals. I say nothing of their relation to absolute truth.) It may be so; we ignorant outsiders cannot, perhaps, judge of what habitués deem majesty, but I must say that to this ignorant outsider now writing, the rags and rubbish and muttered charms enumerated, seem to be merely the lowest kind of fetishism, not a bit more respectable than what the African savages hang round their medicine men.

Are not all legal instruments, too, of the nature and being of a fetish? When "This Indenture," in grand flourishes, witnesseth a contract of partnership—perhaps of marriage—between A. B. and C. D., and then flounders on through a wilderness of words which I defy any of the uninitiated to understand in their true meaning, seeing that they seem to express everything they do not intend, and to burke everything they do; when it disdains quiet commonplace nineteenth-century English, and still sticks to its old Norman-French and abominable Latin; what is that but a fetish, just as absolute as those which we strain so many missionary nerves to grind into powder and cast into the fire? And why—following up the track—should it be one of the functions of my Right Reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of Anywhere, to give me his gracious permission to take Miss Rosa Mundy to be my lawful wife? And why cannot I take Miss Rosa without this permission, and still remain Respectable? That young person and I have made up our minds to plunge into the greatest of all the seas of chance, and for the life of me I cannot understand what my Right Reverend Father in God has to do with the matter. I know

I can, if I choose, snap my fingers in his face, and make Miss Rosa happy (or unhappy, as the case may be) without his sanction; but so can the African savage kick *his* fetish if he has pluck enough; only he dares not, because of that something, that vague power, that unspoken dread, which he himself has conferred upon his rag and rubbish heap.

Two fetishes guard the gates of life; in other words, they are hung over the doors of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and of Surgeons. One fetish goes by the name of Professional Orthodoxy; the other is the Formula of the Prescription. Now, it would seem to the uneducated in such matters, that the mission of medicine is to heal, and not to follow the mere manner of our forefathers; and that, whosoever can bring the art of healing to greater perfection and more certainty, he is the great man of the medical generation, be he of the royal colleges or an outsider—orthodox, or of the free school. But the fetish chalks on the black board a cabalistic sign that looks like M.D., and says "No, we will have only medicine men duly qualified by ourselves, and we will not recognise the degrees conferred by nature, knowledge, or experience; these are uncertificated and uncovenanted services, and we despise their successful methods, and laugh at their beards. The mission of medicine is to heal, if you can, by prescribed means, and to uphold the authority of the royal colleges; but chiefly to uphold this authority, and to repudiate any method of healing outside the prescribed means."

Well! that is one fetish swinging grimly over the gates of life, and a formidable and most tyrannical fetish he is, as many a desolate home and rank graveyard can testify; the other is not quite so harmful, being of the nature of a spell or charm expressed by the symbols ℞ ℨ, j for i, very badly written Latin words instead of intelligible English ones, and a vile mish-mash of directions at the end, which the chemist is supposed to decipher and write in plain mother tongue on the label of the bottle. Why sane people with their ordinary allowance of brains, of the ordinary number and depth of convolutions, could not put this fetish behind the fire, I cannot understand. Would it be such a very terrible revolution in the medical world if a patient, or rather a patient's friends, were told that he was going to take glycerine and iron, or rhubarb and magnesia, or blue pill and black draught, in the language in which we have been taught to say our prayers and blow up our servants, instead of in a queer old monkish rigmarole that would have sent Cicero into fits, and put an end to the days of Quintilian before his time? No one can defend the practice; it is just a fetish and nothing more; a gree-gree, as absurd, unsubstantial, irrational, and destructive to truth and freedom as any mass of rags and rubbish and muttered charms, hung up against the trees and temples of an African village.

And is not our respect to mere rank—rank per se, and not because it is associated with greater nobleness, or retrospective of a mighty time and a glorious name, but merely because it is rank, and a title to roll pleasantly between the lips—is not that a fetish too, of a like kindred to the African's? Why should My lord set our hearts in a glow when he condescends to the social equality of an hour? And why should My lady's soft eyes and genial smile be so very, very much more beautiful than the little confectioner girl's at the corner, whom yet, I think, young Maulstick, our artist friend, would pronounce the more beautiful creature of the two?

Why? Because My lord and My lady wear fetishes stuck all over them, and we fall down and worship the work of our own hands. Very patent and declared are some of the fetishes with which we endow each other. Ribbons, and stars, and garters, and crosses, and orders, and so many stripes on the sleeve, and such and such a pattern of gold on the shoulder, the shape of a hat, the colour of a bunch of feathers, the cut of a coat, and whether the trousers come down to the ankles or are snipped off short at the knee, the skins of beasts—specially the skin of a certain kind of polecat—the colour of a bit of coarse bunting and whether it is red, white, or blue, the pattern of a certain metal headdress, and what kind of crosses and leaves and balls make up the ornaments; the shapes cut into bits of stone, and painted on carriages, on hall chairs, on windows, hammercloths, screens, as well as engraved on silver spoons and pap-boats—all these, and more than these, are fetishes pure and simple, hanging like millstones round the neck of freedom, and bending that and the knee-joints whether you like it or no. A fetish the hereditary system, too. Oh! a grand-sounding, high-headed fetish that! sometimes making more conspicuous the true king—the real leader of men—and sometimes consecrating to limitless mischief the miserable mistake who, but for this, would have been quietly laid hold of by the heels, and set to drill in the wholesome army of disciplined workers. Protected by his fetish men kneel at his feet instead, and so erect into a scourge for their own backs what else they might have employed in weeding potatoes or thrashing corn. Men are very silly about their fetishes at all times, but the fetish of hereditary rule, when the hereditary ruler is a fiend or a fool, is the most amazing silliness of all.

Turn now to the "pomp of ceremonial," as people call it, and say, if you please, where we in England are superior to the savage who smears his body with red paint, and tattooes his face into a high-dress pattern; who wears eagle's feathers and shark's teeth and glass beads and scarlet cloth; and who thinks himself ever so much a grander fellow than he was, if he has a fathom or two of brass wire, or an extra roll of "American domestics." Take our lord mayor's show as one example; we will come to others by-and-by. Gilt coaches, running footmen with long staves in their hands

utterly useless, men in armour — how Sir Launcelot, singing tira lira by the river, would have laughed at them!—great gaudy chains worn over great gaudy gowns, aldermen in furred robes, and learned clerks in square caps, bits of silk stitched round a pole and called banners, sober citizens dressed up like children's dolls in snippets and fragments of silk and tinsel, the whole honest ordinary life of work and home turned inside out, and made like nothing in heaven and earth—that is a lord mayor's show, high-court of the rag and rubbish fetish. But the culmination of this class of fetishism is at court drawing-rooms and levees, when we are proud to parade ourselves as utter and entire savages, whose humanity is oppressed by the fetish of tailordom, and who are no longer men and women with souls to be saved, but merely animated dummies for barbers and jewellers and tailors and milliners to do what they like with. Why is it, because I go to pay my respects (a fetishism in itself) to the queen or the charming young princess—neither of whom knows me from Adam, or cares to see me again, or would give a second thought to my fate if I set off on the long mileless journey to-morrow—why should I be compelled to put on knee-breeches for the display of my miserable legs? Why must I wear a ridiculous coat like a beadle's? Why must I damage my own shins and my neighbour's, with a sword that will stick out the wrong way, and that, do what I will, I cannot any more manage with ease and dexterity, than Noodle and Doodle manage theirs in the tragedy of Tom Thumb? Why must my wife spend a sum of pounds upon a long length of silk which she puts on over her gown proper, behind, and which the great art is to let trail on the ground like a peacock's tail, only it is not half so beautiful? Why should she be obliged to put three white feathers down one side of her head and face, and two long lengths of lace into her "back hair"? Why should she uncover those dear old shoulders of hers to the pitiless light of day and the more pitiless eyes of the court? Why must she run the risk of catching cold by changing her comfortable ribbed merino stockings and rational house boots, for the thinnest silk and satin to be procured for love or money?

Why should all this be? And why should a court dress be regarded as a passport to certain moral and social consideration, if we were not all given over to fetishism, bound hand and foot under the shadow of rags? Ah! what an essay might be written on rags—from the velvet rags of the worn-out throne, to the prison rags of the dead convict! Yes, the whole of a court-day costume is fetishism, as indeed is all fashion whatever. And a most potent fetish too; which it is as much as a man's very life is worth to insult.

Fancy a lank lean uncrinolined petticoatless lady at a Queen's Ball, in the year of Grace one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four! Would not all the little yelping worshippers of the millinery fetish set upon her like so many excited beagles, and bark her into a corner and social extinction altogether? Fancy, too, a "morning dress" of brown merino at a grande soirée, or a low muslin in the morning, though it be the dog-days. And yet what inherent virtue is there in one cut of the cloth more than in another? And why should that be disallowed at twelve A.M. which is de rigueur at seven P.M.? Imagine Aspasia in Ionic chiton and graceful saffron-coloured peplum falling to her heels, walking down Pall Mall with head uncovered and rosy feet—a trifle spread, we should say—shod in sandals! What would all the clubs say to this rebel against the reigning fetish? There are men in those clubs who would face a Balaclava charge without wincing, but I doubt if one among them would give Aspasia his arm. Still less would he give it to the noblest woman now living on this earth, if she had made herself up in tunic and "pantalets," and walked abroad as a full-fledged Bloomer, disdainful of lengths of silk. Yet Fatima and Zuleika may wear a like costume, and be taken as models for pictures and poems and ballets and Christmas pieces for the same; but poor Jane Smith!—Zuleika's fetish and Jane's have different names, you see, and are not interchangeable.

Again, is not our military costume a fetish, whatever else may be of free birth? The high tight stock, and the burning scarlet cloth, and the tight-buttoned, thickly-padded, pocketless coat, and the tight-buttoned, almost-pocketless trousers, and all the darling pipeclay and barrack finery, absurd enough at home but in hot countries simply destructive—what is it but a fetish? a fetish made of rags and routine, but suffered to sit on men's necks till it chokes them, and they fall down dead beneath its weight! A fetish, too, is complimentary mourning; or, indeed, mourning of any kind when the survivors are poor and bread is hard to get for the children. The poor dead ghost would rest none the less safely in its narrow bed, if the scanty means left behind went for boots and beef, and, perhaps, a month's extra schooling, instead of black cloth and deep swathes of crape, and stuffy crape veils, and dusty feathers tied up in bunches and put on the top of a black chest set on wheels, and big blocks of stone, and all the savage paraphernalia of a Christian burial. Of course no law compels you to worship this fetish; but then, remember, if you rebel in these things you fall under the shadow of another fetish—a terribly potent Old Man of the Sea, whose name is Respectability, and whose kingdom is unlimited and his power without check.

Is it not a fetish, the habit of paying morning calls, which however are always afternoon calls; when every one expects to find every one else abroad, and when no one dares, for the life of him, call either in the morning or in the evening, when there would be a better chance of finding friends in their own drawing-rooms? And if this denial is a fetish, what is the habit of "leaving cards," without

even asking who is within? and, could they be seen? If we were to hear of a tribe of naked Makebelieves, who went about their mud villages dropping little bits of torn leaves, or fragments of "tappa" stamped with their "totems" and sign manuals, at each other's wigwam doors, what would we think of them? How we would chuckle over our own superior enlightenment, and pityingly make mouths at their gross savagery! And if these little bits of leaves and fragments of tappa were held by the Makebelieves to mean kindness, and good will, and, I will serve you on the first opportunity, and, God bless you and all the house, and, my heart is yours, and, I hope you are all well, and, I am devoted to you, and, have you had the measles? and, I am immensely attached to you and hope you are not going to be scalped, for then I can never call again — and if all these fine things were never by any chance translated into any other language of deeds save this dropping of torn leaves and fragments of tappa at the wigwam doors—what a throwing up of spiritual caps there would be, and what a footing of spiritual "triumph dances," and what an universal crowing and spiritual cockadoodledoodom all through Christendom at the contrast between its own crystalline civilisation and the bleak blank ignorance of the savages in the wilds! For fetishes have the not uncommon power of blinding human eyes, and making our own black appear snow-white but our neighbour's light-grey the jettiest of jet black, as a compensation. Then there is another fetish connected with this matter of visiting, namely, the day or days. We in England have a loose, sprawling, all legs-and-arms fetish, extending over the six working days of the week, and even invading the seventh; and unless we are fashionable, and in London, we cannot contract these loose-lying members, and bring them up into a compact little once-a-week visiting-day fetish. The French, on the contrary, have theirs so retracted, and contracted, and circumscribed, and pared down, that you mortally offend its airy laws if you do not remember it has only one day assigned to it out of the seven—only one day in all the week when you can go and talk scandal with madame, and carry bonbons to mademoiselle, and envy or admire, according to your sex and the circumstances attending.

Again, the necessity for giving large parties, if you would make yourself a somebody in society, is nothing but a fetish set up on two stout legs—ostentation and rivalry. The need of an introduction before you can speak comfortably with your neighbour, and the absolute impossibility of exchanging a genial word with a well-bred stranger in any public place or on any neutral ground save a railway carriage, is also a fetish, and one that deserves more speedy annihilation than many another. As do all customs, habits, and observances which make forms of more account than humanity, and which stint and stunt and check the outgrowth of nature in favour of a made-up gree-gree, without meaning, truth, or beauty in it.

Then what fetishism reigns in the political world! A fetishism almost as big as that whole world itself, having just a few free corners and sun-lighted spots where the soul of man may rest and be thankful. The American Union is a fetish—a ghastly, blood-bedaubed, howling, shrieking fetish. The maintenance of iniquitous treaties because they were once made, is a fetish; and the preservation of the Pope, poor old gentleman, as the triply-crowned sovereign of the Catholic world and the obstructive of Italy, is again a fetish of the same class. The Custom-house is a fetish; and the passport system is a fetish; that Austria should have a seaboard is a bouncing fetish; and the Balance of Power is a highly etherealised esoteric fetish, always turning up in unexpected places. Fetishes all are close societies, and corporate bodies, and brotherly bondages to which a man must belong if he wish to succeed in any certain walk or work, and without which union the best work he can turn out will not secure him bread and cheese, not to speak of beer and butter. Fetishes are all ordinations—mere muttered charms which are assumed to make a man better than he was before, and something different, too, to what he was before. Not by virtue of his own truth and goodness and insight into spiritual things and fitness for guiding men's souls up to God, but by virtue of the charm—by the grace of the verbal fetish. Fetishes, the vows of monks and nuns, when once the term of spontaneous assent is passed, and the human life is held by the pressure of the vow, and not by the free gift of the free will; and something of fetishism is in the dress, too, as well as in the vow: though this may have a meaning, which fetishes do not often have, in that it enables the wearer to pass freely and without insult, where the ordinarily clad could not go.

A fetish lies in the long hair of women and the cropped polls of men; why may not women (if they like it) cut their hair short, and put their heads into their baths every morning, without being called masculine? And why may not men wear their hair long and flowing as far as nature will permit, without being called effeminate? I own I don't like to see either the one or the other, but then I also know that in this I am a fetish worshipper, and by no means a free-born Briton exercising an unbiased judgment. A little while ago, a shaven chin was an absolute fetish; now, a bearded one seems as if it were going to usurp the place, and be a fetish in its turn. Once, we had a fetish called Honour, to whom men did reverence with blood, and often with their lives; now, we have a fetish called Success, who is almost as cruel and quite as untrue. For, let a man be never so great and never so good, and his life's work of never so noble a pattern, yet if he does not attain worldly success (as represented by money, chiefly, in our country), we immediately hold him tabooed and ourselves released from the obligation of love and respect, pooh-poohing his work as of no account and not coming into the sum of human progress. For we are so blind,

and such astounding fools in our judgments on each other, that we cannot distinguish the sower from the reaper, nor see how, if it had not been for him who set the seed, we should never have been invited to the banquets of him who sheared the harvest. All because of that dull-eyed, open-mouthed, crooked-clawed fetish which we have set up over against the workshops of mankind, and which, if any great thinker or heroic doer does not incontinently bow down to and worship, we take from off its peg and beat about his ears till he falls, destroyed by the fetish of success, to which he has not paid his dues.

SUPERSTITIONS OF SULIAC.

At the extremity of the parish of St. Suliac, on the right bank of the Rance, and at the entrance of the creek of La Couailles, on a point of rock jutting out on the shore, is a grotto called the Den of the Fairy of Bec-Dupuy.

This excavation is raised some feet above the level of the soil. Often at sunrise or sunset is seen rising from it a vapour, white, blue, green, rose-colour, which rises, falls, spreads, floats, melts, and finally displays the form of a woman divinely beautiful—the Fairy, or the Lady Dupuy, she is called in the Brittany country. Often she roams on the shore; her garments glitter with all the colours of the rainbow; and the stars pale before the diamonds that crown her brow. Sometimes she sits on the turf of the cliffs, and dreamingly plucks the petals of the white daisies, which the wind carries away to other shores, with the odour of the wild thyme and the marjoram which her rosy fingers press. She passes light as a bird over the tall grasses of the downs; she speaks to no one, and flies from the sight of men.

Formerly she was sovereign of the place, now on the rocks she weeps for her lost power; the human voice alarms her, and she flies to moan with the winds in the deepest caverns.

Many centuries has she seen pass over the mountains, and yet her polished brow is smooth as if it had known eighteen summers at the most.

She saw Julius Cæsar and the Gauls; she saw the Druids fly before the servants of the true God; she saw the cross raised on the summit of the hills of Brittany, her country, and those who worshipped her disappear one by one in the tomb; she saw her altars fall, and the walls of her temples crumble. Her power has faded like the mists of a spring morning before the sunshine. Alone she remains on the shore, and wanders in the mournful penance to which she is condemned, until the gates of heaven shall be opened to her.

At her voice of old the winds were stilled, the waves calmed, the sea became smooth and clear as a crystal lake. Every fisherman, ere he started on an expedition, came to the beach to offer his homage to the goddess who rendered the wind favourable and the fishing successful. The wives, the daughters, the sisters, the sweethearts of the absent ones, came to lay garlands and flowers at the entrance of her impenetrable grotto, guarded by a pack of invisible hounds, whose savage barkings warned off any who might be so imprudent as to attempt to penetrate into the mysteries of the place.

Since the Saviour, dying for us on the cross, destroyed the worship of idols, the Fairy's Grotto far more rarely sees her than of old, and when she appears in her ancient domains the apparition is supposed to augur ill. Often does she leave behind traces of vengeance, and instead of protecting human beings she frequently injures them, and is pitiless for their tears.

Long ago some shepherds returning from the pastures at the fall of day, found a young girl expiring at the entrance of the grotto. They questioned her, and with the utmost difficulty she made the following recital:

"Long have I been in the habit of coming to this place to meet my betrothed who lives at the other side of the water. Never once had he failed to keep our tryste until three days ago, at which time the fairy appeared to me. From that time I have watched for him in vain; the wind and the sea have been against him, but, nevertheless, I should still have hoped had not the fairy reappeared. Last night at moonrise I heard a little noise behind me, like the fluttering of wings. I sprang up, thinking to see him I waited for, imagining that his approach had frightened some sea-bird hidden among the reeds.

"Before me stood the Lady Dupuy. I strove to fly but my strength failed me, I fell to the ground and remained there as you have found me. My days are numbered; bring me a priest; the fairy said words to me which leave me no doubt of my approaching fate. My betrothed is no more! What has life left for me? Go, friends, the time presses, and my strength is failing me."

The shepherds carried her on their shoulders to the village: she sent for her confessor, repeated to him all that has been already related, and, having received the sacrament, expired.

The Curé of St. Suliac, followed by a numerous assemblage, cross and banners at their head, proceeded to the grotto, and there summoned the fairy to appear. Three times the call was repeated, and (as, perhaps, may not seem inexplicable, all things considered) no result being obtained, he exorcised her, and ordered her in the name of God never to reappear in the place.

Nothing was visible, but a wild wail issued from the mountain, and imprecations which froze the blood of the listeners were repeated by the echoes of the valleys of the Rance, and no one doubted that, but for the presence of the pastor, the flock would never have reached the fold in safety.

Since then, the fairy has occasionally been seen wandering in the moonlight, but she flies at

the approach of men; for, over them, thanks to the intercession of Mary (of course), she has no longer power.

On returning along the sands the procession found a dead body, left by the tide. It was found to be that of the young sailor, the betrothed of the poor girl, who, a new Leander, had been daily in the habit of swimming across the Rance to visit his Hero, and who had, through the malignant arts of the fairy, shared the fate of his prototype, and, as a last stroke of her vengeance, been cast a lifeless corse at the feet of the clergy. The curé had the body taken up and buried in consecrated ground.

The Grotto of the Fairy is still one of the objects of interest for tourists. It is sometimes called the Grotto of Dogs, because there may often be heard issuing from it a sound like the growling and distant barking of dogs.

That these sounds really exist is positive. They may be the echoes of the waves, or they may proceed from currents of air sweeping through the cavern; but so singular are they that it is difficult to enter the cave without feeling considerably impressed by them.

THE THREE CORPSES.

This is no old wife's story, say the people of St. Suliac; it is a true history, and the facts occurred before the lamentable days of '93.

Four or five young men of the bourg of St. Suliac, returning from one of the neighbouring villages, passed, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night, through the graveyard. They had advanced but a few steps, when they perceived before the reliquary three women kneeling in prayer; they approached the women, advising them to accompany them home. In vain; the devotees remained motionless, not even turning their heads. Their silent immobility made the young men feel a little uneasy.

"They are mortes (dead women), boys; let us pass on," said the most religious of the band, crossing himself.

"Not a bit of it!" said another. "Women never made me fly yet; dead or alive I'll see them nearer. Let he who loves me follow me!" So saying, he advanced towards the kneeling group.

"Don't go, Archange," remonstrated his companions; "leave the women alone; they are not, perhaps, what they appear, and if you trouble them you may come to grief."

But Archange, without respect for the place, or heed for the counsels of his friends, advanced to where the women still knelt, and addressed some words to them. Receiving no answer, he snatched off the coiffe* of one of the women, and returned to display it to his comrades.

"What have you done?" they exclaimed. "Suppose she comes to reclaim her coiffe?"

"I'll give it her back, but not without a kiss, for she appeared to be very pretty."

"Pretty or ugly, it is a great shame for a fellow to take off a woman's cap like that."

The young men separated; and Archange went home, put the coiffe in his cupboard, and went to bed and to sleep without thinking any more of the matter.

But next morning, on opening the cupboard, what sight met his eyes! He started back with a cry that brought all the family around him—in the place where he had put the coiffe lay a skull.

Archange, too terrified to touch the dreadful object, shut up the cupboard, and went forthwith to confession.

"My son," said the priest, "your sin is great, but, thanks to your repentance, it may yet be repaired. At midnight the skull will again become a coiffe; take it without fear, but piously and solemnly, and place it on the head of the dead woman whose repose you have troubled. But before doing this you must get some neighbour to entrust to you a young child at the breast; you must carry it in your arms, and do not let it go for an instant either on your way to the churchyard, when you are near the dead women, nor even on your way home. Go now, and do never again trouble the rest of the dead."

At midnight the young man opened the cupboard, the skull had disappeared, and there lay the coiffe. He took it with a shudder and proceeded to the cemetery, carrying in his arms a little baby which his sister had entrusted to him. There were the three dead women; gently he advanced to the bare-headed one, and reverently placed on her head the coiffe he had taken from her the previous night.

At that moment she sprang up and gave him such a sounding box on the ear that he remained half stunned; then the three disappeared with these words:

"Imprudent youth, thou art lucky to have taken counsel of one wiser than thyself; had it not been for the angel thou bearest in thy arms, to-night thou wouldst have slept with us in the tomb where we have slept a hundred years."

From that night Archange never entered the churchyard save on his way to church; and his companions and the rest of the young men imitated his respect for the dead.

JEANNE MALOBE.

You cannot have been born at St. Suliac if you have not heard of Jeanne Malobe. But as it occasionally happens that people are born elsewhere, it will not be unreasonable for these persons to ask who Jeanne Malobe may be?

To get an answer to the question is not so easy; everybody knows her, but no one can tell who she is, whence she comes, or whither she goes. She is a wonderful workwoman, a

* The coiffe is the cap worn by all the peasant women and girls, none but children going bare-headed. In Brittany nearly every village has its own coiffe, and at the fêtes, where the people for miles round assemble, the woman of each *bourg* or *pays* may be distinguished by the form of her coiffe.

marvellous spinster; although very old, she might serve as a model to any housewife. She may be seen of an evening at the fountain of Vorvaye, seated on a hawthorn-bush; she spins all the night through her distaff of flax finer and more glistening than the moonbeams; she whirls her spindle rapidly, and sings to a sad and low chant unintelligible words, in a voice so faint and feeble that the rattling of her nails on the iron of the distaff renders it impossible even to guess in what language are the words of her song. Old, and worn, and toothless as she is, you will find in the morning all the bushes covered with the fruit of her night's labour. Her features are soft and regular; her complexion, despite her great age, is clear and fresh; and her blue and white clothes are always beautifully clean. As Vorvaye is a marshy spot, she always sits on a bush, and takes, by choice, a hawthorn. She washes her thread at the spring of Vorvaye, and, having bestowed on it the quality of dissolving soap and rendering linen spotlessly white, the washerwomen who take a pride in the fair colour of their clothes resort thither in numbers. And as, in order to keep their places, they must pass the night on the spot, they see at dawn her glistening silver threads which wave among the branches of the furze, and which the angels wind to weave the robes of the virgins whom God has called to the skies to follow in the train of the Queen of Heaven.

Never has she been seen idle: she spins and spins her life long; sometimes she is to be seen at Vorvaye, sometimes at the fence of Malobe, from whence has been taken her name, and which she allows no one to cross when she is there. Occasionally she has been met running among the warrens, waving her distaff and pursuing a number of animals of fantastic shapes; and she has much ado to keep away the Menée Ankine, which would infallibly break and entangle all her thread.

This Menée Ankine, well known through all parts of Brittany under various names, is a pack composed of dogs, foxes, cats, badgers, martens, ferrets; in short, all sorts of carnivorous animals which have lived, and which, returning to the earth, assume the most enormous proportions. They howl, yell, bark, mew, utter all the sounds that once naturally belonged to them, and drive before them pell-mell horses, cows, asses, calves, pigs, fowls, ducks, turkeys, that have been left at night in the fields or without the fowl-houses; the poor creatures flying in terror with cries of distress before the infernal pack. And though at every turning some fall exhausted, the number of victims continually increases.

Woe to the man who crosses the path of the Menée Ankine! Never does he live to tell the tale, for, next morning, his lifeless body is found among the mangled and half-devoured remains of the various animals that have been run down and destroyed.

Jeanne alone has no fear of the Menée, and she will not suffer it to cross her domains. Jeanne has never harmed any one, yet she is feared and fled from. Often she weeps on the border of the marshes by the road that leads to Bignon, and she only looks up and ceases her work when the man without a head, who wanders in those places, passes by. The man without a head is as great a mystery as Jeanne.

About thirty years ago he met and spoke to a woman of the pays, named Catherine Signeury. What he said she never revealed to mortal—not even to her confessor—and from that day she ceased not to speak of her approaching end. She fell into a state of languor from which no medicine could revive her, and she died without any visible malady some months afterwards, only saying, "The Headless Man of the Bignon-road predicted it to me."

Jeanne Malobe knows him and his history, but no one has ever dared to question her concerning it or her own; and when he has passed her by, saluting her with a wave of his hand, she resumes her spindle and distaff, and begins once more the spinning of the silver thread which it is said that she must spin eternally, to make the vestments of the virgins and the saints.

THE FAIRIES OF THE RANCE.

The Fairies of the Rance are as good as they are pretty. They are not like the cruel Lady of the Bec-Dupuy, nor Campion's Hare, nor the Den-Bleiz, the terrible Loup-Garou. The Den-Bleiz, a fierce and savage wolf, is a man deprived of his natural form after being excommunicated for committing many dreadful crimes, followed by a false oath on the Cross. He is destined to wander every night in the form of a wolf, and to roam hill and dale until he can receive from the hand of a child of twelve years old a wound with a knife in the middle of the forehead. As, however, no child has yet been found disposed to bar his passage, the Den-Bleiz, or Loup-Garou, wanders still.

If you want to see the Fairies of the Rance, you must come to its borders when the wind howls, mingling with the voice of the thunder, when the sky lowers, and the waters of the river dash against the rocks. There, on the dark and troubled waves, you will see hundreds of tiny figures, blue, white, rose, lilac, green, dancing, floating, disappearing beneath the water, springing into the air, forming chains and circles of fantastic dances; or, languidly stretched on the surface of the tide, their heads resting on their hands, these lovely imps, clothed in all the colours of the rainbow, idly follow the caprices of the stream which rocks them, now scattering, now throwing them together, till it brings them to the mouth of some little tributary, where they assemble in crowds round one figure yet lovelier than all the rest.

This being, clad in floating robes of gossamer, crowned with diamonds, and seated in a bark formed of a nautilus-shell, drawn by two crayfish with emerald eyes, is the queen of the glittering band, and these aërial forms which spring from the clefts and hollows of the rocks are the fairies and genii who have empire over the

waters. Their beloved queen is all-powerful in her dominions; she directs the course of the waters, she moderates the violence of the winds, and she commands the river to spare the lives and the property of those dwelling on the banks, and compels it to cast safely ashore those who may have been overwhelmed in its torrent.

It is said that one day, tired of the homage of her subjects and of her solitary grandeur, she fled from her court, and landing on the island of Notre-Dame, she seated herself on the shore by a tuft of pink heather. A young sailor, studying navigation, and only waiting till the weather should permit his vessel to put to sea, spied the fairy land, and, amazed at the sight of such grace and loveliness, he, hiding behind a rock, remained in mute and delighted contemplation.

The queen, believing herself to be alone, took off her royal mantle, and resting her head on a tuft of soft grass, she fell into a profound slumber. The young man, gently stealing from his hiding-place, came and knelt beside her, respectfully waiting her awaking.

The fairies, missing her, sought her in all directions, till, at last, seeing her boat moored by the isle, they proceeded thither, and finding a stranger thus close to their mistress, they seized and were about to throw him into the river, when the queen, awaking, ordered them to retire.

The young man, falling at her feet, entreated to be told who was his enchanting preserver.

The queen, lifting her voice into a soft and delicious melody, chanted the following words:

What I am thou canst not know,
Thy feeble mind cannot conceive of my state.
What I am no mortal can be;
After thy God I have full power over thee.
I am to thee that perfumed flower
Which the zephyr loves silently to kiss;
I am that flickering light
Which on these shores appears at midnight.

Now on the dungeon, in a vapour grey,
I appear to mortals;
Now in the corner of the evening hearth
My voice sighs or sings softly.
Sometimes I am the tender dew
Which in the morning veils the grass,
And I am the liquid pearl
Which in spring eves glitters on the young wheat.

The bubble which evaporates in the air
And indicates thy lot I send forth,
The cave of the winds, the land of the night and of the morning
Behold me the same day.
I am the finch, the light swallow,
The sparrow, the winged guest of the valley,
The nightingale, the gauzy fly,
The wren, the agile gnat.

Seest thou at evening, roaming on the cliffs,
A shadow, black or white by turns,
A wandering marsh-fire, a blazing light,
Which puts the love-songs of the heart to silence?

I am a voice, the echo of your mountains,
The orb of day, the dull sound of the torrent,
The flower of the woods, the spirit of the fields,
The winged singer, singing of death.

At night I am the freezing breeze
That visits the yews, a messenger of death.
I am in the golden robe, the ring of the betrothed,
The child that laughs and weeps and sleeps.
Mortal! I am the griefs of life,
The good, the evil, the hope of your bright days,
The rainbow harmoniously brilliant,
The voice of God that is for ever and for ever.

I am in the raging sea,
I love the winds. The terror of the sailor,
The black ship at the dark watch
Holds me on her deck, and I command the waves.
Then my voice surmounts the voice of the tempest,
I am life to Satan, heaven-banished!
I am the voice of the evening, the joy of feasts,
The murmur of the great sea, telling of infinity!

A day will come when to the bottom of the abyss
Thou wilt descend, following the course of the great river.
Weak mortal! thou wilt be the victim
Of the foolish pride which will cut off thy days.
Then thy soul, quitting the clay
Which the great God made to enclose it,
Will form the shooting star,
Leaving behind the earthy tenement.

That which I am will one day cease to be to thee a mystery:
Thou wilt know my secret, thou wilt know my power,
But until the day marked for thee to quit the earth,
No mortal can conceive me.

Her song finished, the queen made a sign of adieu to the sailor. She called to her subjects, who, placing on her shoulders her royal mantle studded with Oriental pearls, and leading up a coach harnessed with bright-winged butterflies, the band floated up above the mists of the river, and disappeared in the ethereal regions

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLI. THE WILD WOMAN.

WHAT was she to do? Try another pawn-shop? She had no passport. They must have papers. It was the law, it seemed. But how did people get papers? Were they born with papers? Should she go back to the goldsmiths on the Quai and try them once more? Alas! of what avail would that be? She would receive only the same answers, the same rebuffs. Was there no one in this enormous city of Paris who would purchase a gewgaw from a poor child who wanted to run away? She had heard of a place called the Temple. She had read of it, too, and Madame de Kergolay had talked to her about it hundreds of times as the site of that old donjon keep where the Martyr King and his queen had lain in captivity, and where the poor little Dauphin had been handed over to the cobbler Simon, to be slowly tortured to death. The donjon keep was pulled down now, and the Temple was a place where they bought and sold everything. Should she ask her way there? But she knew that she would have to pass close to the Marais; and an indefinable terror forbade her to retrace her footsteps.

She came, suddenly, in the middle of the pavement, on a marchand d'habits — an old-clothesman. No Jew was he. In Paris, Christians do not disdain to carry the bag, and wear the three hats. This fellow was a Marseillais, swarthy and bright-eyed, with a head of tufted black hair, dazzling white teeth, and earrings. He had two umbrellas beneath one arm, and a cavalry sabre beneath the other, a cocked-hat in one hand besides the three on his head, a pair of patent leather boots tucked in his waistband, and any number of loose garments flying all abroad about him: besides his bulging bag.

"Troun de l'air!" cried the marchand d'habits when he saw Lily, "what a pretty girl."

"Will you buy a locket?" said the girl, shrinking from the man's bold gaze, and holding out the trinket in her little trembling hand. She was desperate, now. She would have had courage to ask the statue of Henry the Fourth on the Pont Neuf if he would buy a locket.

"Carragoui de zeval," exclaimed the Marseillais in return, "I am not a jeweller. What do you want for your little breloque, mon anze zérie?"

"A hundred francs," replied Lily, half choking.

"Masoulipatam!" shouted the marchand d'habits, who seemed to possess an inexhaustible arsenal of strange execrations. "Veux-tou mi rouiner? Ma, I will be generous. Ze souis Chrétien, moi, et pas oune Zouif. Twelve francs fifty centimes for your locket."

"No," cried Lily, passionately. She could have strangled the man.

"Quesaco! crrricuicoui!" continued the Marseillais. "Don't fly into a temper. I don't buy jewellery on fête-days. Come and breakfast with me. Allons manzer, allons boire!" And the eyes of the old-clothesman sparkled like unto live coals.

Lily drew her shawl about her, and, spurning his offer, walked indignantly away.

"Pif de Pilate!" the Marseillais muttered, looking after her, "z'est oune zentille petite fillette za. Never mind. I shall dance at the Barrière du Trône to-night. Marchand d'hab-i-i-i-i-ts." And with his lugubrious and long-drawn-out chant, his bag and his bright eyes, the old-clothesman went on his way. They were magnificent eyes, only he had spoilt them by a habit of squinting, contracted through the endeavour to glance at the first floor windows on both sides of the street at once, to see whether the occupants had any old clothes to sell.

Twelve francs fifty for her locket! The villains. The wicked, wicked, hard-hearted people, she thought. Had she had time, she could have sat down on a door-step, covered her face with her shawl, and cried her eyes out. But it was with her as with the Wandering Jew, "Onward! Onward!"

She remembered that she was not yet quite destitute. Her breakfast paid for, she was still the possessor of between eighteen and nineteen francs. That would carry her some distance towards her destination—support her for some days, she thought. And then she would beg. *She* beg! Perhaps there were cottages on the road where the people were kind and would give her bread and milk, and allow her to sleep on the straw in their barns. She would have nothing more to do with this cruel and pitiless Paris. She would begin her journey at once. How it was to be prosecuted she had not the

slightest idea. She knew she had to reach the coast and to cross the sea: that was all.

The Marseillais marchand d'habits had told her, the *rascal*! that he never bought jewellery on fête-days. Once or twice before in the course of that weary morning's travel, she had heard about the festivals. At the pawnbroker's they had bidden her to be quick, for they were about to close. The poor, it seems, must pawn, even on the morning of a holiday, so the commissaire-priseur opened his doors for an hour or two before the business of pleasure began.

Lily saw that there were a great many more people about, this morning, than on ordinary days; that many of the shops, and nearly all those of a superior class, were closed; that the humbler sort of people mostly wore clean blouses, and the grisettes clean caps; that the students of the School of St. Cyr were abroad in their holiday clothes; that the soldiers of the garrison looked unusually spruce and burnished up; and that the very sergents de ville had waxed their moustaches, and given their sword-hilts an extra polish. There were a good many flowers about; from many of the windows hung banners and streamers; and in front of every public building rose great black triangular stages, like monstrous but truncated ladders, supporting on their many rungs pipkins full of oil and tallow, in which were huge cotton wicks. These were the lampions for the illuminations at night.

Then Lily all at once remembered that this was the twenty-seventh of July, and that Madame de Kergolay had told her that on the twenty-seventh, the twenty-eighth, and the twenty-ninth of that month, in every year, the official gala-days known as the Fêtes of July were held. "They are to celebrate the democratic revolution of July, 1830," the old lady would say, disdainfully; "the revolution so adroitly discounted in their own favour, by M. le Duc d'Orleans and the banker Lafitte. It is an official celebration, strictly a government affair, my child, and the maskings and mummeries and tight-rope dancing are all paid for out of the public treasury. The people have nothing to do with it—absolutely nothing. The only holiday which lives in their memories and in their hearts is the Fête de St. Louis."

Thus Madame de Kergolay; and Lily had, of course, implicitly believed her. But she could not help thinking now, as she watched the gaily dressed and laughing throngs hurrying past, that, if the Fête of St. Louis were in their hearts, the lights of the Fêtes of July shone uncommonly bright in their faces. Every one looked happy: everybody *must* be happy, thought the poor little outcast runaway, her sad heart sinking within her, at the sight of the smiles and the joyous faces. She little knew that among that laughing concourse there were numbers upon numbers ten thousand times more miserable than she.

It was good that she should not know it. It would not have consoled her. She had not yet arrived at that age when "there is something not absolutely disagreeable to us in the misfortunes of our dearest friends." The wretcheder she was herself—being, as you know, young and silly, and not at all a woman of the world—the readier she was to sympathise with sorrow. She was but a little fool, at the best; but she never grew out of *that* folly.

So it was a grand holiday, a very grand holiday. The government liked to encourage holidays; it made the people feel light and pleasant, and saved them from getting the headache over those stupid newspapers. On the third, and grandest day of the fêtes, the newspapers were not published at all:—another thing which the government liked dearly. A good government, a paternal government, a light-hearted government; it rejoiced to see the hard-worked editors and reporters strolling in the Elysian Fields, dining at the Café Anglais, or dancing at the Chaumière—even if they danced that naughty cancan—instead of muddling their brains in the composition of prosy leading articles, or wearing their fingers to the bone in taking crabbed short-hand notes of the long-winded debates of the Chambers. "Enjoy yourselves, my children," cried this good government. "In these last days of July let us sing a Te Deum for fine weather, an abundant crop of strawberries, and the possession of so beneficent a sovereign as that dear old gentleman with the umbrella at the Tuileries yonder. See; he wears a tricolored cockade, the emblem of Liberty, in his hat. Is that not good of him? Let us celebrate the feast of the Patriots of July. What glorious fellows they were. Shout! How nobly they fought. Fire the cannon! How heroically they died. Drub the double drums! How very soundly they sleep, in the vaults under the column in the Place de la Bastille. Let us drink all their healths, and inscribe all their names, even to the humblest blouse-wearer, in golden letters on the marble plinth. As for the patriots of to-day, they are a pack of sulky disagreeable grumblers, mere spoil-sports and trouble-fêtes, and, lest they should mar the bright sunshine of our holiday, we have put them away in the casemates of Belle Isle, and Mont St. Michel, and Doullens, and turned a big key on them. Soldiers! bring your muskets to the 'ready,' and, bombardiers, keep your matches lighted. This is a fête-day. Everybody is to enjoy himself under pain of immediate arrest. Eat, drink, and be merry, my children. Go to the play for nothing. See the illuminations, and the fireworks, and the water-jousts, for nothing; meanwhile, we, who are your parents and best friends, will govern you, and look after all your little affairs, at home and abroad. Tiens! that birchen rod of ours is getting a little limp. Excuse us if we use one of iron."

So spoke the Government of July, thinking it was to last for ever; but it, and its dynasty, and its festivals, and all its pretty little winning ways, are dead and gone, and well-nigh effaced from the memory of man.

For aught Lily knew, the gay doings might be in honour of the birthday of King Louis Philippe, or the birthday of Monsieur Lafitte the

banker. To her mind, the revolution of 1830 conveyed but a very dim and meagre impression. Once, when Mademoiselle Espremenil, who was an Orleanist, told her that three hundred patriots were killed on the Place du Carrousel, fighting against the Swiss guard, she exclaimed, "How very wicked of them to fight against the king's soldiers!" and was called nigaude, and made to copy out the third chapter of Télémaque, for her pains. She had never gone outside the doors of the Pension Marcassin at the time of the celebration of the fêtes, during the whole of her incarceration in that penitentiary. The other girls had given her, from time to time, glowing accounts of what they had seen during the three glorious days; but to Lily those were only fairy tales and fables, as beautiful but as unreal as any in the Arabian Nights.

Now, she was privileged—by her own act and deed at least—to see the grand sight, for a momentary peep at which, even, she had often thirsted, and to wander at will among the merry-makers. But she fled from it all as though it had been a pestilence. She was afraid. While the day lasted, she thought, it would be folly, it would be madness, to venture into the Elysian Fields, where all the world of Paris would be out walking. No, no: that place was to be avoided at all hazards. Still she had an irresistible craving to see something of the brave show, before she commenced her flight to England in good earnest. She would wait until sunset, she thought—until nearly dusk. Then the crowd would be denser, and the quieter sort of folks gone home, and she might mingle with the throng unnoticed and unrecognised.

Now lagging, now hurrying through a tortuous maze of streets, she came all at once into the great garish Rue de Rivoli, and saw the Tuilcries Gardens and the Place de la Concorde one vast Lake of Pleasure, covered with Islands of Delight, blazing in the sun. She turned from the dangerous open, and fled. Ascending the Rue St. Honoré she ventured to cross it before she reached the Palais Royal, and even got safe over the upper part of the Rue de Rivoli into the dismal little labyrinth of by-lanes, full of sellers of old prints, and older curiosities, technically known as the Pâté du Louvre, and which had grown up, a fungus, between the palaces of the Louvre and the Tuileries. To her relief she managed to gain the Quai: not that where the old gold-dealers live, but that which fronts the Long Gallery. She crossed the Pont Royal as timorously as a little mouse seeking a fresh hole, and, diving down the Rue du Bac, was glad to lose herself in a fresh labyrinth of little streets.

She found out, perhaps, the dimmest little cabinet de lecture, or reading-room, that ever was groped for, and at last discovered, in the dimmest portion of old Paris. It seemed, to Lily, not much bigger in size than the cage of a good-sized macaw, and was very dark and gloomy, and so suited her admirably. The old maiden lady who kept this abode of literature had read herself more than three parts blind with bad novels, and was so deeply immersed in one of the admired works of Monsieur Horace St. Aubin, that, when Lily entered, she could barely find time to extend her hand for five sous—the regulation price of admission to the Cabinet of the Muses.

All the people who frequented the reading-room were old—as old as the visitors whom Madame de Kergolay received, but of a shabbier and more dilapidated type. They seemed to be tumbling to pieces with sheer antiquity, both in their bodies and their garments, and to be only kept together by means of stays, and braces, and pins, and buttons, and hooks, the horns of spectacles, the springs of false teeth, and the elastic bands of wigs. There never was such a rickety congregation. Ague, paralysis, neuralgia, and sciatica, seemed to have gotten hold of the furniture as well as the patrons of the establishment; and everything tottered and shook, and trembled and creaked. As Lily walked up the room, and chose the darkest corner, the very boards yielded beneath her tread, and sent up little clouds of dust, giving to her ankles a wreathed appearance, as though she had been a young Mercury.

There was a tall old gentleman who came to the Cabinet, not to read, but to sleep. It could not be said precisely that he snored, but the air about him seemed to be haunted by the spirit of a defunct trombone. And it was a spirit seemingly in pain.

There was a little old lady who represented a prodigious cap, a large pair of green goggles, a red plaid shawl, and nothing else. Her face seemed to have gone out of town, and to have left a P.P.C. card over the spectacles, on which some one had sketched the lineaments of a death's head; but sketched them very faintly. And most of the time even this was a fact which you were not enabled to ascertain with any degree of certainty, as the little old lady usually kept a copy of the Gazette de France before her, never turning over the pages; and under those circumstances she was only so much newspaper, and so much shawl.

Over against Lily there sat an ancient personage of the male sex, lean and long as Don Quixote, and wearing a nightcap under his hat. He had a long green cloak with a rabbit's skin collar; and under this cloak he fondled and cherished a diminutive dog of, apparently, the turnspit breed. There was a very strict prohibition against the introduction of dogs to the Cabinet, in a notice hung up at the entrance. But the old gentleman had very probably been offending against the regulations for the last fifty years. He was the senior, the doyen of the customers. Those who surrounded him were too old and feeble to resent his malfeasance, and the lady at the counter was too much engrossed by Monsieur Horace St. Aubin to take notice of anything outside her book. Still, the old man in the cloak was not exempt from occasional twinges of conscience. The little dog was generally very quiet, but,

from time to time, feeling bored probably, he would poke his nose from beneath the folds of the mantle, with a sharp yap, or a plaintive whine. And then Lily would hear the lean old man whispering in great trepidation to the refractory turnspit: "Hush, for Heaven's sake, Lindor! De la sagesse, mon ami—de la sagesse, Lindor; remember what a risk I am running for thee. Je t'implore, Lindor, de ne pas me compromettre. I entreat thee, Lindor, not to compromise me." Once, the lean old man caught Lily looking at him. The turnspit had been very restless. The old man covered its tiny muzzle with both his white trembling hands, and cast towards Lily a look at once so piteous and so supplicating that the girl felt half inclined to laugh, and half to cry.

She stayed here, reading newspapers out of date, and dog's-eared romances, which excited, for two reasons, her special wonder: first, as to whoever could have written them; and next, whoever could have read them before her. That they had been diligently conned, however, and to some purpose, was evident; for the edges were yellow and shiny with much thumbing, and many pages were blistered with long dried-up tears.

They were all full of love; but it was not the kind of love that Lily could comprehend, with which she could sympathise, or from which she could derive any consolation. Silly girl, she was quite raw and ignorant. She had not yet learnt to take her heart to pieces and put it together again, like a map puzzle. She had not acquired the art of preserving her passion, and boiling it down, and putting plenty of sugar to it, and spreading it on paper, as jam is spread upon bread. Lamentable little dunce! She was yet at the A B C of the great alphabet, which, being learnt, after infinite wailings and canings, only teaches us to spell the words Disappointment and Despair. She was quite a novice in the cosmography of the Pays du Tendre. Had Lily been asked to write a love-letter, it would have begun with "I love," and it would have ended with "I love," and there would have been nothing else, except blots, which are the blushes of manuscript. I have known people who punctuated their protestations of affection. They must have been very much in love indeed.

Here she lingered until the day was declining. She went out at last (the mistress of the place never heeding her), and she left the old folks there, doddering and coughing feebly in their chairs. Those who are alive, and the oldest folks always seem to last the longest, may be there, doddering and choking to this day.

Into the broad streets, and on to the broader quay, and over another bridge; but this time it was the Pont de la Concorde, and they were beginning to light up the lampions in front of the Chamber of Deputies. Then, she was in the vast Place, by the side of the Luxor obelisk. She could resist it no longer. She was beyond the control of reason. She was bewildered—fascinated. Come what may, she must see the sight.

So she sped by the spouting fountains, and entered upon the enormous avenue of the Elysian Fields. The sight almost took away her breath. It was wonderful. Two huge open air theatres, within whose vast prosceniums whole regiments of red-legged soldiers were engaged in deadly combat with white-burnoused Arabs. They fired off real guns, and real howitzers. Real horses galloped on to the stage, not at all alarmed by the noise, whereas the very smell of the powder almost frightened Lily out of her wits.

But the theatres were only a drop of water in the sea. There were Punches by the score. There were Marionettes. There were greasy poles up which adventurous gymnasts climbed, intent on reaching the silver watches, spoons, and mugs—no vulgar legs of mutton here!—suspended to a hoop at the summit. What shouting and clapping of hands when a climber, his strained fingers within an inch of the coveted prize, found the treacherous surface beneath at length too much for him, and so slid down to the bottom again, defeated and fat-begrimed.

There were merry-go-rounds. There were targets at which you could fire au blanc, and if you struck the bull's-eye, found a plaster figure of the Emperor Napoleon arise, like a jack-in-a-box. Ninepins; spring top; roulette playing for macaroons; jugglers; acrobats; rope-dancers, dancing dogs and monkeys; a camel; a bear that beat a tambourine; a goat that danced at the bidding of a gipsy woman dressed up as Esmeralda; a dog that, being desired to name the greatest rogue in company, walked straight up to his master, wagged his tail, and barked an unmistakable "This is he;" several other dogs, with cocked-hats tied under their chins, military coats, and frilled pantaloons, who performed gavottes, looking most mournful the while; a camel, on whose head a little boy executed a saraband; everything, in short, that was wonderful, and strange, and delightful.

Booths where gingerbread was sold, brown, sticky-looking, shiny gingerbread, like Moorish faces on a very hot day, and with great white oval almonds in them, like eyes; booths where sweetmeats were dispensed; where fruit and fried potatoes, hot pie-crust—the famous galette—and gauffre cakes were to be had—all these abounded. And shrilly sounded above the myriad noises of the throng, and was audible even in the intervals of blank cartridge firing, the voice of the man who sold cocoa. "A la fraîche! à la fraîche!" he cried. A little round tower, with crenelated top bristling with many-coloured flags, and hung with gay tinkling bells, was strapped to his back. Beneath his arm passed the brass pipe and tap from which he frothed his cool but mawkish beverage. Around his body was slung a wooden cestus, and thick hanging from it a store of goblets of burnished tin, that shone as bright as silver. Still cried he, "A la fraîche! à la fraîche!" his bells tinkling, and his flags waving through the jostling mass.

There were no dandies here, no leaders of fashion, no eye-glass wearers, no fan-twirlers. You might look around in vain for gold watch-chains, for varnished boots, for bright bonnets,

or for robes of silk. This was the People's festival; and they, the People, pure and simple, were here in force. This was one of the three days in the year when Jacques Bonhomme was in his glory, and had the best of it. He might come in a clean blouse, or in a dirty blouse, or in his shirt-sleeves; but he was welcome to the show for nothing. So many hundred thousands of francs were set aside every year to amuse him, and to buy him toys, and to make him forget his rights. He forgot them, for the nonce; but the paternal government who turned showman on Jacques's behalf, found it impossible to make of the whole year one long July, and to have a festival every day. The result of which solution of continuity was, that when it wasn't July, and there were no fireworks, dancing-dogs, and open-air theatres, and work was scarce, and bread dear, Jacques Bonhomme would turn on the paternal government, suddenly remember his rights, and rend his rulers in pieces.

Lily thought it very kind indeed of the good gentlemen, whoever they were, who had provided this sumptuous spectacle, and charged nothing for it. She had a vague idea, from some staring placards she had read on the walls, that the Prefect of the Department of the Seine had something to do with this grand merry-making. He must be a very good man, she thought. Perhaps it was *his* birthday.

She had eaten and drunk nothing since breakfast; so, calling to mind that she was hungry, she dined frugally on two sous' worth of gingerbread and an apple. She had even the hardihood to stop one of the men who wore the round towers strapped on their backs, and, accosting him as "Monsieur," asked him for a glass of cocoa.

The particular merchant she chanced to patronise displayed considerable splendour in the fittings of his establishment. His round tower was covered with crimson cotton velvet, hooped with gilt foil paper, and embowered in his flags was a little brazen eagle with outstretched wings.

He frothed up the cocoa so for Lily, that the beading bubbles on the rim sparkled in the evening sun like diamonds, and presented her the goblet with an air.

"Drink," he said, "belle dame. It is the nectar of the gods."

It wasn't anything of the sort. It was merely so much Spanish liquorice boiled down with a little sarsaparilla, but the merchant had such a winning way with him that, had he asseverated that the Nabob of Arcot's diamond was dissolved in his cocoa, he might have found those to believe him.

"How much, monsieur?" asked Lily, when she had drunk.

"To you," the merchant replied, with a bow and a flourish, "one sou. A pint of cocoa and a quart of froth, all for five centimes."

Lily paid him. Straightway he whisked out a napkin which hung from his cestus, gave the goblet an extra polish, frothed it again, and handed it to Lily.

"Drink again, belle dame," he said. "For this I charge nothing. It is my humble offering to youth and beauty. And I declare that had not my family, through political misfortunes, supped deeply of misery, and were not my old grandmother, là-bas, down yonder in la Sologne in misery, sur la paille, I would have made you pay nothing for the first."

Although the girl's thirst was assuaged, she did not like to offend the hospitable merchant, and so half emptied the goblet he offered her. Then she thanked him and curtseyed, and turned, and was soon lost in the crowd.

"I salute you," cried he of the round tower, looking after her retreating figure. "Belle dame, I am at your feet. Pauvre petite," he continued, polishing up his cups, "she is too young and too pretty to be wandering in this tohubohu, quite alone. But, bah! she is safer here than on the Boulevard of the Italiens. The blouses will do her no harm. A la fraîche! faites-vous servir! à la fraîche!" and he went on his way, jangling his cups and tinkling his bells.

It was nearly eight o'clock, but bright and mellow daylight yet. Lily had been struggling against temptation for a long time, but she could now resist it no longer. She had never seen one before in her life. She must go inside and see one—a show.

No, not the educated seal, the pictured resemblance of the monster on the cartoon outside the booth, where he resided, terrified her. Not the Oriental menagerie either: the roaring she could hear through the canvas, the squeals and yelps as the keeper plied his switch, and the acrid odour, peculiar to wild beast shows, appalled her more than the terrific paintings, much larger than life, of the panther of Java, the gigantic baboon of Sumatra, the hyæna of Abyssinia, the crocodile of the Nile, and the boa constrictor of Seringapatam, by means of which the enterprising proprietor of the Oriental menagerie strove to attract patronage. The grand concourse of the combat of animals, where a wretched old white horse was to be baited by sundry mastiffs, she likewise avoided.

But the wax-work show! the royal and imperial exhibition of wax-work of Signor Ventimillioni (from Milan), she *must* see that. It cost ten sous to see this show, but Lily paid them.

Signor Ventimillioni himself took her half-franc. He was a tall, sallow man, with a coal-black beard, and wore a velvet waistcoat of Scotch plaid, but was otherwise attired as a Roman emperor. He stared very long and very impudently at Lily. What was there about the child, that every one stared at her so?

She drew aside a curtain that veiled the entrance, and entered. She started back with a shriek at the first object she saw. It was a colossal gendarme in a monstrous cocked-hat and jack-boots. His face, fringed with huge peaked moustaches and chin-tuft, was pale as death. His eyes glared horribly with a fixed and stony gaze. In one gauntleted hand he brandished a gleaming sabre. He looked like one of those ominous officers of the Convention Lily had seen in pictures, who came to conduct

Marie Antoinette to the scaffold. He had come at last to take her, she thought, shrinking in her inmost soul. She was to be arrested for running away, and trying to sell her locket!

"You little imbecile," cried a fat cattle-dealer from Poissy, who had followed close on her heels, and giving her, as he spoke, a slight push with his umbrella, "you foolish child, don't you see that ce cuistre à ceinture jaune is only wax-work?"

The cattle-dealer had paid his ten sous before, and often, and knew the ways of men and wax-work shows. He was chuckling at his penetration, when the voice of Signor Ventimillioni was heard in a shrill treble, frantically shrieking:

"Les armes et les parapluies sont déposés à la porte—weapons and umbrellas must be left at the door. Advance, messieurs et mesdames. Advance, I supplicate you."

The cattle-dealer turned back, grumbling, to give up his gingham; but Lily advanced. The show soon made her feel very faint. It smelt oppressively of lukewarm wax, and sawdust, and old clothes. Apart from the good King Henry the Fourth, Monsieur de Voltaire, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Sir Hudson Lowe (who was aptly represented in a yellow cloak lined with leopard's skin, the well-known uniform of general officers in the British army), the collection was mainly composed of eminent murderers. Louvet was there, holding, of course, the identical poniard with which he slew the Duke of Berry. Next him Avril, and Lacenaire, who with a bottle of Chambertin before him was represented as absorbed in the composition of a sonnet. Fieschi with his arm shattered, and his face all dabbled with blood; the personages in the Affair Fualdès, playing boston at a gory card-table; Pontis de Sainte-Helène in the fetters and red nightcap of a Toulon galley-slave; the Bergère d'Ivry—for there were victims here as well as assassins—with her throat cut, and the Courier of Lyons with a bullet through his head. Horror!

"Call that Madame Lafarge?" the cattle-dealer from Poissy was heard to murmur as he halted before the effigy of a fashionably-dressed lady wearing a white chip bonnet and a black lace veil. "It is an infamy, an imposture! Je te reconnais, coquine. Thou hast not been to the fair of Poissy for nothing. Two years since thou wert Charlotte Corday; last July thou wert the Duchess of Berry previous to her betrayal by the Jew Deubz, and now, affublée d'un nouveau cotillon, and that gimcrack bonnet on thy head, thou must pass, forsooth, for the Veuve Lafarge, née Marie Capelle. C'est une supercherie inouïe. I demand my money back. I have a great mind to beat thy waxen head off, fraudulent puppet." It was evident that the confiscation of his umbrella still rankled in the cattle-dealer's mind.

Forth again into the Babel of money-making went Lily. She had had enough of shows for the time. Where was she to pass the night? How shamefully she had loitered her time away! How recklessly she had been squandering her slender stock of money! But she could not muster up courage enough to flee the enchanted ground. It had a strange and deadly fascination for her, and, like a moth round a candle, she felt she must continue to hover about it: even to her destruction.

She absolutely, before it was quite dark, went to see another show. It is true that this was a humble spectacle, and only cost five sous. The attraction was a solitary one: there was but a wild woman to be seen.

"La femme sauvage—la femme sauvage!—the wild woman!" cried, with stentorian lungs, the orator, in a full suit of armour and a hussar's busby, from the platform in front of the booth. "The wild woman from Madagascar, the largest of the group known as the Inexorable Islands. Her name is Antannariva Zoraïde. The idolatrous practices of her ancestors she has abjured, and is a good Christian, wearing three medals blessed by le Saint Père the Pope, who sent to Rome for her expressly to bestow his patronage and benediction upon her; but she lives entirely on raw meat, and neither threats nor persuasion can induce her to wear stays. The wild woman! Ladies and gentlemen! This is her last appearance in France. Reconciled to her illustrious family, she leaves to-morrow morning for Madagascar by the Messageries Royales of Messrs. Lafitte and Caillard, stopping only at Lisbon in order to be presented to the infants and infantas of the House of Braganza. The wild woman, messieurs les amateurs! Her disposition is amiable, and her tastes are artistic. She can lift a weight of one hundred and fifty kilogrammes with the little finger of her right hand, and suffer a pastille to burn to charcoal on the tip of her tongue. En avant for the wild woman. Admission only five sous, a reduction of eight hundred per cent in consequence of la cherté des denrées—the high price of provisions. Nobody can enter without paying, but paying without entering is permitted by the civil and military authorities."

The crowd, who had been listening to this balderdash with a grin of bewildered complacency, burst into a roar of laughter at the concluding witticism. There was a press of sight-seers at once to the ladder. That prodigal little Lily, after gazing for a while at the violently chromatic portraits of the Wild Woman strangling a Tigress; the Wild Woman riding three wilder horses at once; the Wild Woman in the wilds of her native Madagascar, taking refuge in the branches of a banyan-tree from the pursuit of the hunters; the Wild Woman kissing the Pope's toe; the Wild Woman lifting ponderous weights, firing off pistols, and defeating the celebrated Monsieur Grisier in a fencing match—after contemplating these astounding works of art, the desolate little girl wandered into the show, which was now lit by a hoop of flaring oil lamps suspended from the centre pole of the tent, and took her seat with some twenty others on the last of a row of planks placed on trestles.

There was a little proscenium and a rude set-scene supposed to represent Madagascar. On

the prompt side there was a screen, and on the O. P. sat a hump-backed man with a flageolet and a kettle-drum, the which he thumped and blew alternately.

But he tootled on this pipe, and whanged the parchment so long, that the audience grew impatient. It was surely more than time for the show to begin. Murmurs of "La femme sauvage! La femme sauvage!" began to be heard. "Eh marchez donc: faites voir vos trucs," was the next expression of the popular wish. The orator in full armour pushed his way through the auditory, climbed on to the stage, and disappeared behind the screen. Voices were now heard in angry contention; but still the Wild Woman failed to make her appearance.

There was the voice of a man, seemingly endeavouring to pacify an infuriated woman. The man's voice Lily recognised at once as that of the orator in chivalric panoply whom she had heard haranguing outside. The voice of the woman:—Merciful Heavens! where had she heard those angry tones before? and why did they sound like a death-knell on her ear, and send a cold shiver through her heart?

At this conjuncture a gentleman in a blouse, affected perchance by the heat of the weather, or by inordinate libations of cocoa, and stung to desperation by the prolonged absence of the Wild Woman and the monotonous iteration of the flageolet and kettle-drum, cried out, "Attrape, Mayeux!" and flung a roasted apple at the orchestrant. Hit by the soddened pulp precisely on the nose, the hunchback uttered an unearthly yell, and rushed from the stage, shrieking, "A la garde! à la garde!"

The sound of something breaking — glass seemingly—was next heard, and a black bottle became visible, and rolled to the footlights. The gentleman who had flung the pomme cuite, and who occupied a front row, picked the bottle off the stage, smelt it, and exclaimed:

"Cognac. The Wild Woman must be en ribotte."

But the words had scarcely left his lips before the screen was violently dashed down, and a woman, thinly clad in a tawdry and absurd costume, made her appearance in the enforced company of the orator in armour. I say enforced; for, by one hand she held him by the hair of the head, while with the other she brandished aloft a three-legged stool, with which she was minded, apparently, to brain him.

The audience taking this to be a part of the performance, and, in fact, the prearranged entrée en scène of the Wild Woman, began to applaud vehemently; but the dolorous expostulations of the armour-clad orator soon undeceived them.

"Help, help!" he cried, in piteous accents; "ladies and gentlemen, I shall be murdered! This woman has taken too much cognac. She is mad. She will kill me!"

Suddenly the Wild Woman relaxed her grasp, flung the showman disdainfully on one side, and stood planted in the middle of the stage, her hands on her sides. Lily looked at her. She was a powerful woman, lithe and shapely, but of what age it was impossible to discover, through the paint and the sham tattoo-marks with which her face and arms were ruddled. For all apparel she wore a suit of fleshings, a blue gauze scarf, sandals, a spangled skirt which failed to reach to her knees, and a preposterous head-dress of Dutch metal and feathers.

But anon Lily became conscious that the Wild Woman was looking at her with a fierce, fixed, hungry gaze. There was something in her eyes that struck infinite horror and terror into her. And just as the Wild Woman made a step in advance, as though towards her, Lily started from her seat in affright, and rushed from the booth.

A TOUCH OF THE GOUT.

When Sydenham, our father of medicine, discoursed of gout, and felt it in his own toe as he wrote, he found one poor comfort in the fact "that gout, unlike any other disease, kills more rich men than poor, more wise than simple. Great kings, emperors, generals, admirals, and philosophers, have all died of gout. Hereby Nature shows her impartiality, since those whom she favours in one way she afflicts in another." It is always the rich uncle or father in the farce, or the king in the burlesque, or the leading statesman in parliament, who limps with a gouty leg; and, until of late years when gout has become rather common among the poor, there has been a sense that gout was, at any rate, a respectable disease to have. Savages never have it. There can be no doubt that it is one of the fruits of civilisation, and a very early fruit. Gout troubled the old gentlemen who sat in the Areopagus, and they had it in all forms. Their physicians called it a foot seizure (podagra) when it seized the foot, a hand seizure (chiragra) when it took its victim by the hand, or gonagra if it pinched the knee, or arthritis if it inflamed several joints. It was first called gout at the end of the thirteenth century, from the Latin for a drop, because it was supposed to be caused by a humour distilled drop by drop into the joints. Seneca counted it among the signs of Roman degeneration in luxury that even the women got their equal share of gout; gout being a disease rare in women, and, when it does occur, occurring in them usually when they are advanced in life. The disease, said a doctor of Galen's time, is one that "none but the gods can truly understand" its coming and going; and that doctor told the case of a gouty man, who, in an interval of his disorder, won a foot-race at the Olympic games. In much later time the appearance of the chalk-stones formed in gouty joints, combined with knowledge of one cause of gout to suggest the theory, that they were deposits of the tartar of wine. It was crusty port venting its crustiness upon its friends.

Suppose that a man who considers himself quite healthy is to have his first attack of gout.

He goes to bed happy, and is awakened after a few hours' sleep, usually between one and four in the morning, with pain in the ball of one great toe, which increases with a sense of burning and throbbing, and he finds next morning that his toe is swollen with a deep red shining skin. Moreover, it is so exquisitely tender, that during the height of the attack he cannot bear the weight of the bedclothes or the shaking of the bed by footsteps in the room. There are a series of such attacks. Then the swelling abates. In a few days the skin itches and peels off, and there is in the joint only some little remaining tenderness. That is the form of a brisk first attack in a man otherwise healthy. Gout has a partiality for gnawing at a man's great toe. Of five hundred and sixteen cases of gout observed by Sir C. Scudamore, three hundred and fourteen seized on the great toe of one foot only, twenty-seven fastened upon both the great toes, but only two fastened upon the thumb, only fifteen touched in any way the hand or wrist. In not more than five cases in a hundred, in fact, is any joint affected with true gout where the great toe has not been, or is not, also a sufferer, and in those cases there has usually been some local injury to cause the gout to appear first in some other than its natural place. As for the pain, "Screw your joint," said a Frenchman, "in a vice till you can no longer bear the pressure, that is rheumatism; then give the vice another twist, that's gout." Gout having once seized on its chosen outwork, has a tendency to fight its way upward, first storming the ankles, then making an ugly rush upon the knee, then taking possession of the hands and elbows. There used to be a superstition that gout lengthens life, and Cullen endorsed the maxim that the only remedy for it was "patience and flannel." But he would not now be considered a wise man who should resign himself thus to the mercy of an enemy that can deal fatal blows, though it does usually kill when it has made death welcome by depriving life of all its pleasure. A man otherwise healthy who is careful of diet, may, indeed, live beyond his eightieth year after suffering from gout for more than half a century; he may remain free from chalkstones, stiffness, and deformity, and suffer only few and slight attacks in his old age. But with many, the gout remains long enough in a joint to destroy its flexibility, or to deposit chalkstones, which were so called when people supposed them so to be. They are not chalk, and they may contain no particle of lime, but they contain a large proportion of a salt—urate—of soda. Chalkstones are much more commonly absent than present; or they are not very often present as visible disfigurement. In a slight degree they are often to be found, and if they occur anywhere in any degree, they are found usually on the ear, commonly near the thin upper edge, as little pearly spots, or a single spot that may be smaller than a pin's head; they give out, when pricked, a milky fluid; or such a spot may be as large as a split pea, and, when hard, is firmly fastened to the gristle of the ear. These testify to the altered condition of the blood, the difference being that while it may retain all other natural constituents in just proportion, it has two constituents, always there but properly only in small proportion, combined as urate of soda, and existing in unnatural excess. It is the business of the kidneys to remove all but a very little of the urate of soda formed within the body. When they fail to do that, and it accumulates, its irritation causes gout. Dr. Garrod, whose book on the subject, representing the researches of seventeen years, is the standard professional authority, has contrived an ingenious way of discovering whether a man has gouty blood. He puts into a flat glass dish, about a teaspoonful of the serum or fluid part of the blood to be tested, adds a few drops of acetic acid, and then puts into the mixture one or two fine but rough ultimate fibres from a piece of unwashed huckaback or other linen. After standing undisturbed two or three days—the time varying with the state of the atmosphere—if there be too much uric acid in the blood, it will have crystallised like sugar-candy round the linen fibre, and its crystals will easily be recognised under the microscope. These facts, apparently so simple, represent a marked recent advance in medical knowledge. Apart from the different course of symptoms, the presence of an excess of this acid in the blood, as shown by the thread test, emphatically prevents all possible confusion between gout and rheumatism. Where the serum of freshly-drawn blood will show it, it will be shown also by the fluid that a blister draws, if it be not a blister placed over an inflamed surface.

But if urate of soda in the blood give men the gout, what gives them the urate of soda? Is it all the doing of old crusty port? Certainly not. In the first place, there is a hereditary tendency so strong that Dr. Cullen even thought all gout hereditary. In three cases out of five, or at any rate in more than half the cases, gout may be traced back to parents or grandparents. It is part of many a man's rich inheritance. "A few years since," says Dr. Garrod, "I was consulted by a gentleman labouring under a severe form of gout, with chalkstone, and, although not more than fifty years old, he had suffered from the disease for a long period. On inquiry, I ascertained that for upwards of four centuries the eldest son of the family had invariably been afflicted with gout when he came into possession of the family estate."

And so when a man sets up for himself a gout that he has not inherited, he has something at any rate which he will probably leave to his children. A first attack of gout is seldom seen in a patient younger than twenty or older than sixty-six, the greater number of such attacks occur between the thirtieth and fortieth year; but inherited gout sometimes appears very early. When a man sets up gout for himself, he gets it by use of fermented drinks. Had there been no fermented drinks,

gout probably would never have existed. But different drinks tend in different degrees to produce it, and the latest information on that subject is worth having. It is not the alcohol that does it. Brandy or gin or whisky—any distilled spirit taken by itself—seems to have no power in producing gout. It comes of drinking wines, strong ales, and porter. It is very rare among the whisky-drinking classes of Scotland and Ireland. Dr. Christison, in thirty years' experience at the Edinburgh Infirmary, met with only two cases of gout, and the patients in each case were fat overfed English butlers. Russians, Poles, and Danes, who drink distilled spirit, know hardly anything of gout. The Thames ballast-heavers, of whom each man drinks when at work two or three gallons of porter daily, yield, though a small body of men, many cases of gout to the Seamen's Hospital Ship. As they are most of them Irish, the disease cannot be inherited. The gout is produced by the large doses of porter.

Of fermented drinks, those which are most apt to produce gout are port and sherry, or strong varieties of other wine. Free use of port or sherry may produce gout in a few years when there is no hereditary tendency. The lighter wines, as claret, hock, moselle, and champagne, may excite an attack in gouty subjects, but when taken in moderation, have little influence in producing gout, and—except the finer and stronger qualities—rank, in this respect, with the weaker kinds of beer.

Of malt liquors, stout and porter tend most to produce gout; next to them, strong ale and even the ordinary bitter beer. Dr. Garrod tells of a patient aged only thirty, who was connected with a pale ale brewery, and had suffered four years from gout, which was becoming chronic. It had been established without any help of his forefathers, by the habit of repeatedly drinking pale ale in small quantities at a time, though the total amount in the day was considerable. It is curious that while strong distilled spirit does not produce gout, fermented drinks are liable to do so in proportion to their strength. Acidity is not the cause, nor sugar; for acid claret is comparatively harmless, while sherry and port, the least acid of wines, are the most powerful for mischief; so, too, liquors the least sweet may be the most baneful. In other respects than as gout producers, the distilled spirits are more mischievous than wines; they bring in their train, their own diseases when used in excess: only gout is not one of them.

Indigestion in certain forms, a rich animal diet, and excess of food, tend to the establishment of gout. Severe sedentary study, or mental anxiety, or any nervous depression injuring the digestion, will tend also in other ways to get the unwelcome urate into the blood. Gout, perhaps because of the difference of diet, is less common in hot than in temperate climates, and its attacks are especially common in the spring and autumn: most common in spring: least common during the hot months of summer.

There is a peculiar tendency to gout in painters, plumbers, and workers in lead.

The predisposition being established, every man finds out what will bring on a fit of his gout most quickly. One cannot take a glass of champagne, another cannot take a glass of port, another cannot take a glass of Madeira, without producing it. A patient subject to gout only in a slight degree, felt pinching pains in the toe immediately after drinking a second glass of port wine. Whenever a few glasses of wine, ale, or porter, tend quickly and invariably to inflame a joint, that inflammation is a touch of gout, and nothing else. Given the tendency, whatever produces indigestion, especially if with acidity, may excite the disease. One man got gout if he drank lemonade, another man was lamed by eating citron. Cold, or a wind checking perspiration, will bring on an attack in some patients; one sufferer always had his gout brought on by the east wind. Then as to the depression of mental labour; there is the case of a scholar who brought on a fit of the gout by solving a hard mathematical problem, and it has been known to follow loss of blood by bleeding at the nose or tooth drawing.

GUNNING.

Gunning is my theme; not the patronymic of those three beautiful sisters who fired the hearts (if the dried-up integuments can be so called) of the court gentlemen in the time of the Regent, but the great art of shooting; on English manor or Scottish moor, from the back of a pony or the bows of a punt, in solitary ramble or grand battue; indulged in by My lord with his party of friends, his keepers, his gillies, and his beaters, by Bill Lubbock the poacher, known to the keepers as an "inweterate" with his never-missing double-barrel and his marvellous lurcher, or by Master Jones home for the holidays from Rugby, who has invested his last tip in a thirty-shilling Birmingham muzzle-loader, with which he "pots" sparrows in the Willesden fields. Gunning, which binds together men of otherwise entirely opposite dispositions and tastes, which gives many a toiler in cities pent such healthful excitement and natural pleasure as enable him to get through the eleven dreary months, hanging on to the anticipation of those thirty happy days when the broad stubble-fields will stretch around him, and the popping of the barrels make music in his ear; gunning, a sport so fascinating, that to enjoy it men in the prime of life, with high-sounding titles and vast riches, will leave their comfortable old ancestral homes, and the pleasant places in which their lines have been cast, and go away to potter for weeks in a miserable little half-roofed shanty, on a steaming barren Highland moor, or will risk life and limb in grim combat with savage animals in deadly jungle or dismal swamp. Gunning, whose devotees are numbered by myriads, the high priest whereof is Colonel Peter Hawker, of glorious memory, who

has left behind him an admirable volume of instruction in the art. Not unto me to attempt to indue me with the seven-league gaiters of that great man; not unto me to attempt to convey hints, "wrinkles," or "dodges" to the regular gunner: mine be it simply to discourse on the inner life of the art, showing what can be done, in what manner, and for how much, and giving certain practical information in simple and concise form to the neophyte.

And first to be mentioned in a treatise, however humble, on gunning, are guns. A muzzle-loading double gun by a first-class London maker costs forty guineas; or, with its cases and all its fittings, fifty guineas. The leading provincial makers, and those of Scotland and Ireland, charge from thirty to forty pounds complete; most of their guns are, however, in reality manufactured in Birmingham, where the price of a double gun varies from twenty pounds to two pounds five shillings, or even less, according to quality. The second class London makers charge from twenty-five to thirty-five pounds, but most of their work is made at Birmingham, and only "finished" in London. The London work is much the best; for, as the wages paid are much higher, London attracts the best workmen from all parts of the country. Another reason, is the greater independence of the workmen in London. In Birmingham especially, between trade agreements on the part of the masters, and trade unions on the part of the men, a man who can work better or more quickly than his fellows is continually hampered, and he generally makes his way to London, where he finds a fairer market for his labour, and fewer restrictions. The situation of Birmingham, near to the coal-producing districts, renders the cost of fuel much less than in London, and all the operations which require a large expenditure of fuel, such as the welding and forging of the barrels, &c., are done at Birmingham, even for best guns, and it is frequently asked, since all the materials, barrels, &c., come from Birmingham, why pay the much higher prices of London makers for the same thing? meaning that as the London makers get their barrels (the chief portion of the gun) from Birmingham, the prices they charge are extortionate. Now, what the London barrel-maker really does get from Birmingham is simply two rough tubes of wrought iron, not fit in their then condition even to serve as gas-pipes. All that makes them of any value as gun-barrels—the boring, filing, putting together for shooting, &c.—has to be done in London, at four times the cost, and generally with ten times the accuracy, of Birmingham work. The fallacy lies in supposing that "the same thing" is obtained in both cases. If what a man buys when he purchases a gun be merely the six pounds of wrought iron and steel in the barrel and locks, and the half a foot of walnut plank in the stock, the value of these materials at twenty pounds a ton for the metal and a shilling a foot for the wood is less than five shillings for the whole, and he may well consider he is overcharged if he pay a pound for the complete gun. But what he buys is really the time and technical skill of the contriver, the time and skill of the workman, the waste of manufacture (and how enormous this frequently is, may be judged from the fact that ninety pounds of rough metal will be consumed in making a pair of Damascus gun-barrels weighing about six pounds when finished): these are the real things purchased, and whether the buyer pay ten or fifty pounds, he will generally get only the value of his money, and no more. Skill and time can never be brought to the same close competition as the price of raw material, and the tendency of both is to become dearer instead of cheaper every day.

During the last four or five years the use of breech-loading guns has become common in England. The system adopted is called the "Lefaucheux," from the name of its inventor, and it has been general in France for many years. Twenty-five years ago some guns of this pattern were brought from Paris by Mr. Wilkinson of Pall Mall, who endeavoured to introduce their use into England, but without success; and they were finally sold at one-fourth their cost, as curiosities only. The price of breech-loading guns of best quality is five guineas more than muzzle-loaders; they are sold in Birmingham at from eight pounds to thirty pounds. The advantages of a breech-loader to young sportsmen are, principally, that the guns cannot be over-loaded, two charges cannot go into the same barrel, the charge can be taken out in an instant, and though, if the gunner be clumsy he may shoot a friend, he cannot by any possibility shoot himself. This little distinction is highly appreciated, since accidents in loading from the muzzle were by no means unfrequent.

To a moderate-minded man, three or four thousand acres in England would be a good manor, of which four hundred should be covert. Potatoes used to be good covert, now the best is clover left for seed, mangold, swedes and turnips, beans, &c. The usual price is one shilling per acre, but in the neighbourhood of London and large towns the rent is higher, and the value arbitrary. For four thousand acres, to do the thing well, one should have a head-keeper, whose cost will be as follows: a house, a guinea a week for wages, five pounds a year for clothes, twelve pounds a year for ammunition, a certificate three pounds, and a "deputation" from the lord of the manor, without which he cannot, I believe, legally take a gun away from a poacher. He generally has a pony and a spring-cart allowed him, sometimes the keep of a dog. It has been well observed, that "it is not every fellow with a short jacket and half a dozen pockets, that is fitted for a gamekeeper." He must be trustworthy; for, he has in the mowing-time to pay a shilling a nest to the mowers, sometimes to pay for the destruction of vermin, &c., and he can cheat if he like. He should be a good, but not a noted or crack shot; not such a shot as keeps his hand in by practice on his master's game; and he should be thoroughly knowing in

the habits of all manner of vermin, and in the mode of destroying them. He should not be allowed to break dogs for any one save his master, or to rear pets, or in fact to do any extraneous duty. A gamekeeper's situation is a pleasant one when he and his master pull together. There is always enough to do, both in and out of season, to keep a zealous man fully employed. He should be brave, yet not pugnacious; amicable, and on good terms with the neighbouring farmers, yet not sufficiently so ever to wink at poaching, however mild—and the natural instinct for poaching, even amongst farmers of the better class, is something marvellous—and civil and attentive to his master's guests. N.B.—It is usual to give a keeper five shillings for the day, if shooting at a friend's manor, and then he cleans your gun; at a grand battue, a guinea is frequently given, but for a day's *partridge*-shooting five shillings is ample. This, be it remembered, is expected. Your head-keeper will want a man under him, with wages of twelve shillings a week, and a house, and at certain seasons watchers or night-men. These are generally paid by the night. The beaters employed at battues are very frequently old men or boys on the estate who are fit for nothing else; they get from one shilling to half-a-crown for their day's job.

For such a manor as I have pictured, two brace of pointers, or setters, and one retriever, would be enough, and a good close-working spaniel, or a brace or leash according to fancy. A brace of well-broken second season setters should be purchasable at from twenty-five to thirty pounds. Spaniels at five pounds each; a good retriever would be cheap at twenty guineas, ten pounds being a very common price. If possible, by all means breed your own dogs, or get them bred by your friends; a purchased pointer is a pig in a poke; purchased, I mean, through the medium of an advertisement or from a regular dealer. Some animals so bought have never even had powder burnt over them, cower at the shot, and fly away home immediately afterwards; others have a kind of "crammed" instruction: that is to say, they will be very good when kept in constant practice, but if left at home for a few days will forget all they have learnt, and come into the field wild and ignorant. Pointers are more useful than setters for partridge-shooting, easier to train, less liable to take cold, more easily steadied, and more tenacious of instruction. On the other hand, setters are superior for grouse-shooting, being harder footed. Spaniels are the most useful of all dogs: there are two classes, the "mute," which are the best for all practical purposes: and those which fling their tongues, begin their noise as soon as they are put into cover, put all game on the alert, and send every jack hare and old cock pheasant out of the other end. A spaniel should stop when he rouses a rabbit or hare, should never range more than thirty yards from the gun, should drop when the gun goes off, and should then lie until signalled on. He should go through any furze or brambles, like a rat, should be short on his legs, long in his body, have a long head, go to water, and retrieve alive; he should work with his tail down, and the set of the tail should be down also. His ears should be bell-shaped, small at the top and large at the bottom. The best breed is the "Clumber" spaniel, which is always mute, always lemon and white in colour, but not generally fond of the water. The next best breed is the Sussex, liver and white; the darker the liver, the better; the best marked have a white blaze down the face, white muzzle, liver nose, lips flecked with liver, and flecked legs, belly and hips white, and white collar and chest. The most fashionable spaniels are mute black and white, or black and tanned, legs feet and toes well feathered before and behind, and the feet round as a cheese-plate. As to retrievers, when you hear people speak of a genuine retriever, do not place much credit in their assertions, as there is no regular breed, and the best retrievers are generally mongrels, half poodle, half spaniel, and sometimes with a cross of Newfoundland. A well-taught retriever combines the qualities of pointer, setter, spaniel, and water-dog, with his own peculiar instinct of fetching a dead bird out of any brake, and carrying him with jaws of iron and teeth of wool. I need not say that such a dog is invaluable.

If you go in for pheasant-breeding, you go in for expense at once. The artificial food for three hundred pheasants, *until they shoot their tails*, would cost fifteen or twenty pounds. By artificial food, I mean eggs, rice, greaves, chopped onions, lettuce, &c. I should say that every pheasant shot on any manor costs twelve shillings, for they *must* be reared by hand. The good friend with whom I have had many a pleasant day in the woods, calculates the cost of his birds at a pound each; but he does everything in an unnecessarily princely fashion, and has a staff of keepers and beaters inferior to none in number or cost.

Grouse-shooting in England can be pursued in Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Westmoreland, in some parts of Wales, in Kerry, Limerick, Wicklow, and Tipperary in Ireland, and in the Scotch Highlands. Within the last few years grouse-shooting has become such a fashionable amusement that the prices of moors have risen enormously, and have at length attained a fabulous height. Twenty years ago, the highest price for a moor of from twenty to forty thousand acres, fit for four guns, was four hundred pounds; you would be lucky now, to get it for double the money. This is owing to the manufacturing gentry, who are tremendously keen grousers, and have a general leaning towards gunning, and can afford to pay magnificently. Here it may be well to call attention to the advertisements of moors to be let for the season, the owner of which stipulates that the tenant shall be "limited to a thousand brace"! He must not shoot more, for fear of thinning the stock on the moor. Caveat emptor. The intending answerer of such advertisement may safely pledge himself to abide by this stipulation, and if he and his friends bag three hundred brace, they may think themselves

highly favoured. Setters and pointers (Russian and Spanish preferred by some) are the best dogs to shoot grouse to; the time, between the 12th of August and the 20th of September, though some talk of October and even the early days of November, but you will get better grousing between the dates I have mentioned; a large bored gun, and, if with a muzzle-loader, No. 3 shot. Colonel Hawker says: "Grouse take a harder blow than partridges."

Also in the sporting journals, under the heading "To Let," will you find the entry, "Splendid deer forests." A deer forest is so named on the celebrated lucus à non lucendo principle, it does not contain a single tree, but is simply a Highland tract of land from which sheep have been kept off—as sheep and deer will never feed together. The most celebrated are the deer forests of Lord Lovat, the Duke of Richmond, the Duke of Athol, and, above all, of the Marquis of Breadalbane; for a good deer forest, a thousand a year is a low price, and every deer shot, costs, on an average, from sixty to eighty pounds. Let no man, unpossessed of great bodily strength, with lasting power and patience, undertake deer-stalking. To walk for miles to the shooting-ground, to crawl on all fours or on the stomach for several hundred yards through brake and brushwood, and then to take steady aim at a distance of over a hundred yards at about the least, requires men in high training and of natural bodily strength. But your amateur, however good, is never equal to your gillie, whose eye is more acute than the best Dollond or reconnoitrer; whose arm is as steady as a rock, after any amount of exertion; and who goes up any number of the stiffest braes without turning a hair, or apparently without an extra pulsation. A knowing shot, your gillie, and one who never neglects an opportunity. They tell a story of a noble lord who, last year, was out on his moor with his favourite gillie, when he spied a noble stag about four hundred yards off. The nobleman put his rifle to his shoulder, covered the object, then lowered his piece. "Donald," said he. "Me lard!" said Donald. "That's a fine shot." "Et wad be a faine shot for the mon as wad het it," was the Highlander's sententious reply. "Take the rifle, Donald, sight it carefully, and give it me back—if I knock over that fellow, the rifle shall be yours." The gillie took the rifle and sighted it, and gave it to his master, who fired and killed his stag. According to his promise, he gave the rifle to the gillie. Since then he has never been taken nearer than four hundred yards to any deer on his estate!

Never let any ribald "chaff," any denunciation of Cockney sport, prevent you from enjoying a good day's rabbit-shooting whenever you have the opportunity. With a couple of mute spaniels and a sharp terrier you may have an excellent morning's sport, but you must remember that it is very quick shooting, and you must keep your gun on the cock, and be ready to pull the instant you see the rabbit run, if you would have a chance of hitting him. Be wary, for rabbits are wonderfully "up to trap;" pretend not to be looking after them, and you will throw them off their guard; but if you advance in a business-like manner, gun in hand, depend upon it that a flash of white tails is all you will see of your game—of the older ones, at least; the younger are less knowing, and more easily potted.

For any hints about wild-fowl shooting, go to Colonel Hawker, and consult no other. He is a little rococo and old fashioned; but, in the main, he is as right now as he was when he wrote, and his advice is sound, practical, and sensible. Take it all with that "grain of salt" which the old Latin proverb prescribes; for though there lived strong men before Agamemnon, there are not many men strong enough to undergo all the hardships which Colonel Peter Hawker lightly touches upon in his hints on wild-fowl shooting.

It is unusual to take a dog with you when invited to a day's shooting. But in partridge-shooting, when you receive the invitation, it is common to ask the question, "How are you off for dogs?" and to take them, if wanted. To take your dogs over, without having ascertained the wish of your host, will cause you to be regarded as rather a cool hand. Perhaps, after all, spaniels are the most serviceable animals; setters and pointers are not much used in England, as there is little "laying" for birds under the new system of farming, and now turnips are drilled, birds rise before the dogs.

Finally, do not imagine that you can leave the London season, the jolly nights in the Club smoke-room, the heavy dinners with ingoted East Indian uncles, the twenty-one dances winding up with a never-ending cotillon, indulged in night after night; and then go down to Norfolk, or wherever may be the manor to which you are invited, and shoot. The thing is impossible; you must be, to a certain extent, in training; at all events, your wind must be decent, your muscles braced, and your hand and eye steady. A long waltz may be good for your wind, but it will shake your arm; and a pipe of Cavendish or a couple of extra cigars will spoil your sport for the day. So do not be down-hearted at first if you fire wild, or if the squire and his country friends grin a bit as the birds fly away unharmed: wait; let your faith be "large in Time," as Mr. Tennyson has it; and very soon you will feel your hand getting in, and you will find that, as sweet Will, who has something on everything, says, "Your shooting then is well accounted."

THE LAST OF THE TOLL-GATE.

"Shall I go round the crescent, sir, and save the gate?"

It was thus that the unfeeling driver of a Hansom cab addressed me, through the trap in the roof of his vehicle, on the night of the 29th of June last.

"No, no," I said, in tones of virtuous indignation. "Don't let us cheat a dying institution: go through, and let me pay my last twopence."

I am willing to confess that I had often been

a consenting party to that détour round the crescent. Not that I ever saved anything by it, for the driver always looked for the twopence in addition to his fare, and always had it, taking it in the light of a reward of merit; but such is the rooted aversion of a free and independent Briton, glorying in Magna Charta and popular representation, to anything in the shape of a tax for the support of those institutions in which he takes so much pride, that he will bestow his money upon the vilest of mankind rather than pay it into the hands of a paternal government, or any of its myrmidons. But on this occasion, the free and independent Briton was swayed by other feelings peculiar to his great nature. He was not going to hit an institution when it was down. So he went through the gate, and paid his twopence like a man.

The toll-keeper seemed to be also conscious of the touching and pitiful nature of the occasion. For the first time since I, the independent Briton, had, to my cost, known him, he spoke civilly, and, in giving me change out of sixpence, actually said, "Thank you, sir." Not to be outdone in this respect, I said, "You're very welcome, I'm sure, for it is the last twopence I shall pay you."

"Oh no, sir, I hope not," he replied. "There's all day to-morrow for you; we don't shut up for good, till twelve o'clock at night."

He seemed to say, "Don't despair; there is yet time and opportunity left to do a virtuous action." It was very kind of him. I was inclined to believe that to oblige me he would have been willing to continue the gate for a few days longer. I did not, however, desire that he should so far put himself out of the way on my account. I merely expressed my intention of paying a visit to the gate on the following day, delicately hinting at hospitality on my part. I was rejoiced to find that he would have no objection; that, in fact, he would be very happy to see me.

This was one of those happy hits which men make at random on the spur of the moment, and which are worth the best and most elaborate efforts of thought and deliberation. If the truth must be told, I had always regarded that toll-gate keeper with awe, nay, with some feeling of dread. Like many other persons in authority, he seemed to be encased in an armour of unapproachableness, hedged round by a divinity that repelled all familiar advances. With a strong disposition towards statistics and useful knowledge, I had for some time desired to make his acquaintance, and to learn from his own lips something of the philosophy and experience of toll-gate keeping. I was curious to know whether the theory of a certain celebrated person with regard to the misanthropical nature of the pursuit was correct; or whether it was merely a malicious libel on the part of one who had been a victim to tolls. I was desirous to know if the keeper of a toll-gate regarded all mankind with the same aversion as all mankind regarded him; and perhaps I was curious to peep into the interior of that mysterious little round-house, and see a toll-keeper in the privacy of what might literally be called his domestic circle. I had long desired to fathom these things; but had never, with every elaboration of design, made the great advance towards them which I now achieved. Until this happy moment, when a mutual sentiment brought us together on a friendly footing, I had signally failed in my endeavours to approach the keeper of that toll-gate. I had often strolled down to the gate with the intention of engaging him in conversation, but my courage invariably failed me. I was afraid that he might think me impertinent. Again and again I walked round the little house, in the hope that my timidity might miss its footing and land me quite by accident in the confidence of the solemn functionary of whom all I knew was that his name was John Brown. In vain. I never succeeded in getting in his way, in running against him, in artfully contriving that he should run against me, or in any other way bringing myself under his notice. It would have been absurd to ask him the right time, for there was a big-faced clock in the front of the gate proclaiming the hour to all the passing world. I thought at one time, in the pride of my knowledge of human nature, of approaching Mr. Brown with a friendship's offering of a pot of beer extended in my hand; but I was warned against this course by the possibility (albeit I considered it a very bare one) of his being a teetotaller. I thought at another time, having observed that Mr. Brown was addicted to the weed, of smoothing my way with a bundle of cigars: but was deterred by a fear lest my motives might be misunderstood, and lest Mr. Brown should suspect me to be a spy of the Trust. I may say that I beat about Mr. Brown very much, learning many things from the perusal of the table of tolls concerning the charges for horses and asses, drawing and not drawing, and for waggons, vans, and carriages, the felloes of whose wheels were of certain dimensions, &c., but of Mr. Brown himself, nothing.

When I walked down to the gate the following afternoon, I became sensible that a great sensation was prevailing in the neighbourhood. A great sensation had been prevailing in that neighbourhood for some considerable time; but now it was spreading out far and wide, like a rising flood, swamping the whole district in a deluge of excitement. There was a manifest tendency of the walking population "down the road," and a marked disposition on the part of the shop-keepers, to gather in knots on the pavement, as if they expected fireworks or a comet. There was much discussion, too, which became more and more earnest as the gate was approached. I have reason to know that as a politician the High-street is thoroughly radical; that it has a great idea of free trade, reduced expenditure, and abolition of taxes; that it is great, occasionally, at the Wilkes and Liberty Hall in Lower Platform-street, on the rights of man, and the wrongs inflicted on society by a grasping hierarchy and a bloated aris-

tocracy; that it is ready at any moment to vote for Blater, and the right of meeting in the Parks, and that it hates all placemen, holders of sinecures, and the privileged classes generally. Yet, I found it to be the unanimous opinion of the High-street, more particularly towards its lower end, that the demolition of the toll-gate would be highly prejudicial to its interests, that it was a most unwarrantable and unconstitutional proceeding, and that it was directly inimical to the rights of man keeping shop in that vicinity. There was a decided disposition to connect the abolition of toll-gates in general, and of that toll-gate in particular, with the baleful influence of a grasping hierarchy and a bloated aristocracy; and I am sure that the connexion would have been logically and conclusively established if the High-street had only seen how to do it. At one corner, the High-street, being interested in beer and the choicest spirits at dock prices, including old vatted rum, was quite clear that in a mysterious manner, not capable of lucid explanation, but indubitable nevertheless, the removal of the toll-gate would have much the same effect on beer and spirits as an advance in the price of hops, or an increase in the excise duty. A little higher up, the High-street, being interested in tobacco, as regards one window, and invisible perukes as regards the other, gloomily resigned itself to the conviction that when the gate was removed society at large would give up smoking, and cease to be bald. Next door but one, the High-street, being professionally engaged in making up gentlemen's own material, had also made up its mind that the gate and the habits of civilisation would disappear together, and that mankind would, with the stroke of twelve that night, incontinently return to nudity and blue paint. At a particular corner, on the pavement, the High-street being concerned in trotters, saw in the destruction of the gate a fatal blow to pork, tending to the ultimate extinction of that useful though not ornamental animal, the pig; at the same time opening up a broad and clear road leading to the workhouse. In fact, the High-street, though thoroughly radical when other persons are concerned, was, on this occasion, when the party concerned was the High-street itself, eminently conservative.

On the other hand, the drivers and conductors of cabs and omnibuses, whose interests lay in a different direction, and whose views had no doubt been enlarged by a daily survey of mankind from 'Igate to the Habbey, contemplated the dissolution of the gate with undisguised satisfaction, while the juvenile population, at all times strongly iconoclastic, was preparing to celebrate the occasion in a becoming manner, and to seize the earliest moment, when the protection of the law should be withdrawn, to break the toll-gate's windows.

Through this terrible war of mental elements I made my way to the doomed gate, and, accosting Mr. Brown, hoped I saw him well, or at least as well as could be expected under the melancholy circumstances. How often it happens in life that the man whom, when you did not know him, you regarded as haughty and unapproachable, proves, when you do come to know him, to be the most affable fellow imaginable! I had not been two minutes in Mr. Brown's company, before I perceived that in walking round him and beating about him I had entirely mistaken Mr. Brown's nature and wasted my own time. I might have approached him with a peace-offering of a pot of beer, and been received with joy; I might have paved the way with a bundle of cigars, and found it the direct road to his affections. I imagined him to be a great frozen block of reserve, but I knew now that I might have melted him throughout with three-penn'orth warm. I conceived him to be a pillar of darkness; I discovered that I might have lighted him up with a pickwick.

Would Mr. Brown take anything? Mr. Brown's ready apprehension of the significance of this masonic form of interrogatory made me almost painfully sensible of the absurdity of having suspected him of teetotalism. Mr. Brown would take *anything*, but, for choice, old ale. The way in which one of Mr. Brown's boys, on receiving a shilling, annihilated time and space and disappeared through a double swing door leading to the region of old vatted rum, was suggestive of lightning. Did Mr. Brown smoke? Mr. Brown, casting his eye towards the tall red chimney that erected itself from the flat roof of the toll-gate like an inflamed mark of admiration, said that he *could:* evidently implying that, as regards smoking, a flue with a short draught was a fool to him. For choice, Mr. Brown took returns—and I had hesitated to approach him with regalias!

Was Mr. Brown sorry that the gate was about to be done away with? This timidly and gingerly, lest Mr. Brown might resent any interference with his private affairs. But Mr. Brown had no reserve. He put himself at once on the footing of a sworn witness on a highway committee.

"Sorry! Lor' bless you, sir, I shall be jolly glad when twelve o'clock comes, and it's all over. You wouldn't believe the life the 'busmen and the cabbies have been a leading me for a week past; ah, for a month a'most. To-day it has been dreadful. And you may be as good at chaff as you like, but you can't have an answer ready for every one. Me and my boys have been making up things to say all the morning, and we've given it to a few of them pretty hot, though, of course, some of them had the best of us. There's a surly old fellow as generally goes round the crescent and evades the gate when he can, but the other day he was obliged to come through.

"'Ah!' he says, 'there will be no gates after Friday.'

"'Oh yes there will,' I says; 'they're going to leave one on your account.'

"'Which gate is that?' he says.

"'Why, Newgate!' I says.

"You should have seen how he whipped into his horse and made off double quick. Then, there's a saucy cheeky sort of a chap as drives a Hansom says to me:

"'Hullo, John!' he says, 'what are you going to do when the gate's down? Start a baked tatur can, or go into the catch-'em-alive-oh line?'

"'No, neither,' I says, 'but I don't mind telling you what I intend to be up to. I'm going to do something to get put into the house of correction, and when I come out with a ticket-of-leave I'll be fully qualified to drive a cab.'"

While Mr. Brown was thus discoursing in the most communicative manner, he was constantly under the necessity of breaking off short to run and take the tolls; or, if it were not a vehicle of sufficient importance for his own notice, to shout to his two boys to take the tolls for him. And the two boys were always scurrying out into the roads and scurrying back again to drop coppers into the capacious pockets of Mr. Brown's white apron.

"There's some folks think, sir, that toll-keeping is an easy idle kind of life. They only see me for a minute as they go by, and that's all they know about it. If they was to stand here fourteen hours a day, as I do, they'd know different. You're never at rest a minute; there's always something a-going through. It's no use to sit down; you can't sit for two minutes together; and getting up and down like that is very trying to the legs. I know what toll-keeping is, sir. I've been in it all my life. I was born in a toll-gate down at Pangbourne—it wasn't like this, you know, it had rooms and all kinds of convenience—and that, perhaps, *was* easy; but here in London it's almost as bad as the treadmill; that is, I should say it was, sir; of course I don't know for certain. It's not what it was, toll-keeping. Everything's re-dooced so, now-a-days. We're obliged to make a reduction for taking a quantity. Why, there's forty 'busses goes through this gate, each, on a average, fourteen times every day, and we take the lot for ten pound a week. It would be more than ten times that, if we were to make them pay every time. But if we had done that, there wouldn't have been half the 'busses on this road. When a company thinks of starting, they come to us and say, 'What will you take us for?' And we say, so much; and if it's what they can afford, they come on the road, and if it's more than they can afford, they don't. But we're always liberal, sir. We let the cabs pass free when they're empty; that ain't a right, sir; it's a privilege which we allow them. And what's the return they make for that privilege? Why, when they've got a fare they go round the crescent, and then when they're empty they come back through the gate. That's what a cabman calls gratitude. I've known them flash little bits of newspaper cut up to look like tickets, to the boys when they've been larking and not taking much notice. I've been done that way myself, once or twice; I've caught a few out, though. I remember my old master, Mr. Levy, the contractor, bowling a cab-driver out in fine style. The man, after driving him more than a hundred yards on the Trust, took him sharp up the side of the crescent, and so evaded the toll. When he set Mr. Levy down at his house, and he'd paid him his right fare, he says, 'Ain't you going to give me the twopence for evading the gate?' 'No,' Mr. Levy says, 'I won't do that, but as I'm the contractor for the tolls, I'll give you a summons as early as I can to-morrow morning.' And he did too; but he was a good sort, and wouldn't have taken no notice if the man hadn't been cheeky. I used to collect the post-duty under Mr. Levy; that was in the old coaching times, before railways. My station was down near King's-cross, and I used to take the tickets as the post-chaises went by, some of them bound for Gretna-green; for, somehow or other, sir, lovers were fond of running away to be married when it was a hard job to do it; but now, when there's railways and it's easy, they don't seem to care about it. Human nature, I suppose, sir? But taking post-duty was better than toll-keeping. I used to get a penny on every ticket, and I've often earned as much as eight pound a week. But the post-duty was done away with, and now the tolls is to be done away with. This gate has had a good many shoves at one time or another. It was up at St. Giles's once; but they shoved it on gradually to here, and now it's to be shoved right out into the country somewhere. No; I don't think I shall go with it; but I ain't afraid. I've always found that when one gate shuts, another opens. A gent said to me to-day, 'Why, Mr. Brown,' he says, 'with your figure and your aprons, you would be a credit to Doctors' Commons.' I'll drop into something, I dare say. I've been taking stock of the traffic on this road for the railway bill, and perhaps I'll get a job to take tickets for Puffing Billy. The 'busses and the cabs are all rejoicing because the tolls is to be done away with; but I tell them it will be all the worse for them in the end. Puffing Billy will come and knock them all off the road. No; I don't pay a rent for the toll. The contractor trusts to me to do the best I can for him."

After an interval for refreshment and the quiet digestion of all this toll lore, I revisited the gate at about eleven o'clock. The excitement was intense now. The little house was surrounded by a crowd of two or three hundred persons, male and female, the youthful portion showing a strong disposition to dance. Many of Mr. Brown's personal friends had arrived and were inside the toll-house, drinking Mr. Brown's health. Beer was coming over from the public-house—in pots at first, in cans presently, eventually, as the hour of doom approached, in pails. Presenting myself at the door of the house, I was refused admission, but, on being recognised by Mr. Brown, was admitted—to the great envy of the unprivileged classes outside, who seemed to regard me somewhat in the light of one who had the entrée at court. Inside, Mr. Brown's friends were drinking out of the

pots, out of the cans, out of the pails. Beer, beer everywhere, not only to drink but to stand in, sit in, swim in, if any one had been so inclined. Beer, too, was going on outside. The hilarity was becoming fast and furious. Mr. Brown was delighted. He put himself in the position of a host giving an al fresco nocturnal fête. He was glad to see everybody; anxious to make everybody happy. Music was suggested. Mr. Brown procured a boy with a tin whistle. The tin whistle being voted weak and inadequate to the occasion, Mr. Brown sent to some neighbouring depôt of music and secured the services of a band, consisting of a cornet-à-piston, a trombone, and a drum. Beer having been administered to the band, it was hoisted up on to the roof of the gate, from which elevated position it played many favourite selections, while the mob below danced a sort of Carmagnole round the toll-house. A stranger coming up at that moment would have found it difficult to say, in view of the buckets of beer which still continued to be carried across, whether the occasion were a fire; or, in view of the wild revolutionary dance, whether the toll-house were a sort of Bastille, and the people were taking it by assault! Every vehicle that arrived was immediately surrounded by the mob, who seemed to derive some sort of savage satisfaction from seeing the last tolls paid. Wild shouts hailed the surrender of every twopence, as if (taking the revolutionary view of the matter) the coins were the heads of tyrants falling under the stroke of the guillotine. Heavily laden omnibuses dashed through the crowd in triumph, the drivers flourishing their whips, the occupants of the knife-board standing up and waving hats and handkerchiefs, while the conductors, with that politeness which distinguishes them, took sights at Mr. Brown, and shouted "Ya-ah!" at him as if he had been a wild beast having his teeth filed and his claws cut.

Time advances. Beer is hoisted up to the band in a bucket, and in a moment of impatient waiting for music, when all eyes are directed to the elevated orchestra, the trombone is seen upon all fours drinking like a horse. Inside the house Mr. Brown's friends, too numerous for the limited accommodation, are beginning to drop and drag themselves among the beer, suggesting bluebottles on a sloppy public-house counter. Considering that before the close of the proceedings beer actually found its way through the roof, it was a mercy some of them were not drowned.

"A quarter to twelve. Hurrah! Ten minutes to twelve. Hurrah!" A cab comes up with an unprotected female in it. The cab is immediately surrounded by the mob, and the unprotected female turns pale and shrieks. She is assured that it is not her life that is wanted, but only her twopence. A hundred hands are held out for the money, and though it is taken by strangers, it is immediately handed over to Mr. Brown. "Five minutes to twelve! Only five minutes more, Brown; suppose we burn the gate, and finish up with a bonfire!" Mr. Brown is so good humoured, and so thoroughly enjoying his "breaking-up," that I really believe he would have made no objection to this proposition if it could have been carried into execution without immolating his friends. I doubt, however, if the toll-house in its then saturated state would have burned readily.

"One minute to twelve. Hurrah! hurrah!! hurrah!!!" A tremendous shout this time; the band, with a dim apprehension of the nature of the occasion, fatuously playing the Death of Nelson. A cab appears with another unprotected female, who, amid frantic acclamations, pays the last toll. "Twelve!" The protection and countenance of the law being withdrawn from the toll-house, crash goes a shower of Macadam through its windows. Happily Mr. Brown's friends are all prostrate, and the consequences are not tragic. Another shout, to which Mr. Brown responds by taking off and waving his white apron. And all is over.

Passing along a day or two after, I found nothing to mark the spot where the gate had stood but a little blue patch of Macadam, under which one might have supposed the toll-house to be buried. I hear, however, that the gate is not dead yet; that it has had another shove; and that, while being dragged bodily up the Euston-road by two horses, for whose strength and spirits it was a great deal too much, it was given into custody by a member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

THE AMAZONIAN NATURALIST.

This does not mean the fly catching of one of those hybrid beings, neither man nor woman, whom it is the custom to call Amazons, but the adventurers of Mr. Walter Henry Bates on the borders of the river Amazon, where he lived for nine years, hunting for all manner of creatures, "with a view towards solving the problem of the origin of the species" as his final and philosophic aim; but with, what is more to our purpose, the practical result of a very charming book, full of pleasant details relating to the "eight thousand species new to science," which he introduced to the European world among the fourteen thousand seven hundred and twelve that made the sum of his discoveries.

It was a pleasant life that he led, if at times a dreary, rambling through the virgin forests where the long lines of trailing parasites swung to and fro, as heavy-bodied toucans and pretty little marmoset monkeys sprang nimbly from bough to bough, where the hot moist air came upon his face like the air of an English stove-house, and where the days were loud, and the nights tumultuous, with the roar of animal life peopling the human solitude; and many were the strange and beautiful things he saw. And first what struck him was, that in South America everything climbs. The trees climb, and so become parasites, when elsewhere they are independent and self-supporting; and not only one special kind of tree, but all kinds, even

to a certain palm (surely the last to be thought capable of parasite flexibility?) which we call the Desmoncus, but the natives the Jacitára, and which is a great nuisance in the forests, because of the strong recurved spines at the tips of the leaves, that catch off the hats and tear the clothes of the unfortunate traveller not mindful of his steps. The monkeys climb; there are no groundlings as in the baboons and orang-outangs of the Old World, but all are aboreal, with long tails to help them at a pinch, flexible at the tips and sometimes naked and sensitive like a fifth hand; the gallinaceous birds, answering to our cocks and hens and partridges and pheasants, climb more than they fly, and perch only on the highest parts of the trees; a creature allied to the bear family, a genus of "Plantigrade Carnivora," has a swinging length of flexible tail like the monkeys, and climbs as well as any of them; and the very ground beetles of other countries have here changed their natures, and live exclusively "up a tree" like the rest.

In fact, the law seems to be that everything shall climb, whatever its nature or habit; and that everything shall try to overcome everything else. Parasites sit as tufts on the crowns of the high forest trees, circling the boughs with radiant necklaces, or looping stem and stem together—some in single strength, others interlaced as chains, others again twined as cables, and some indented and jagged; air-roots, striving for nourishment, drop straight as plumb-lines from the boughs, some bearing gracious flowers and others lovely leaves, and all the haunts of humming-birds, and beautiful moths, and shining flies, and gem-like beetles. Sometimes the parasite is mean and poor and disfigures the tree where it hangs, and sometimes it is rich in scarlet and white and purple and yellow; and sometimes—as with the Sipó Matador, or Murderer Liana—it kills its support and foster-mother. This Murderer Liana is one of the strangest of all. It springs up close to the tree where it intends to fix itself, and its stem grows by running over the trunk of its supporter like a plastic mould of bark. Then it puts forth, on each side, an arm-like branch which looks like a great vein, or as if a "stream of sap were flowing, and hardening as it went," and which flows on till each meets the other, and the two veins become one. "These arms are put forth at somewhat regular intervals in mounting upwards, and the victim, when its strangler is full grown, becomes tightly clasped by a number of inflexible rings. These rings gradually grow larger as the murderer flourishes, rearing its crown of foliage to the sky mingled with that of its neighbour, and in course of time they kill it by stopping the flow of its sap. The strange spectacle then remains of the selfish parasite clasping in its arms the lifeless and decaying body of its victim which had been a help to its own growth. Its ends have been served—it has flowered and fruited, reproduced and disseminated its kind; and now when the dead trunk moulders away, its own end approaches; its support is gone, and itself also falls."

Amongst the most curious of the many curious facts which Mr. Bates has recorded, is that of the bird-catching spider, Mygale avicularia, so long held to be only a figment of Madame Merian's own brain, and to have been attested by M. Palisot de Beauvais, rather from complaisance than from truth; but the existence of which is now established without doubt, Mr. Bates having seen with his own eyes what he has related. He saw a large hairy spider, nearly two inches in length of body but with legs expanding to the length of seven inches, and both body and legs covered with coarse grey and reddish hairs;—he saw this monster crouched on the body of a finch about the size of an English siskin, which, smeared with a filthy liquor, but not quite dead, still palpitated beneath the fangs of the horrid brute. Another finch lay on the bole dead; and the dense white web stretched across a crevice in the tree, but broken now and the birds entangled in the pieces, told the whole story of the capture. The mygales are called crab-spiders by the natives, and if touched shed their hairs, causing a peculiar and almost maddening irritation. They are sometimes of immense size, and Mr. Bates saw one of them with a cord round its waist, led about the house by some Indian children, as if it were a dog. Many of the spiders of the country are of exquisite colours, and some, which double themselves up at the base of leaf-stalks, deceive their prey by thus looking like flower-buds. One, a species of Acrosoma, has two curved bronze-coloured spines, an inch and a half in length, proceeding from the tip of its abdomen: it spins a large web, its spines, so far as can be seen, neither hindering nor helping in the work. As for the webs, some are like silk, and some like fine muslin; and some of the dens are broad slanting galleries two feet long, burrowed in the ground, others are nests built in the trees, or hammocks slung across the angles of a room, or hung up on the tiles and thatch of the house-tops.

Then there are the ants; specially the Saüba ant; that big-headed creature which thatches its entrance-domes with leaves, thereby causing most unsightly devastation to the best of the cultivated trees. For the cunning little thief will not touch a rough and ready forest tree of its own country (sometimes, indeed, it will condescend to a very young and tender native), but, in general, attacks only the imported and cultivated trees, as the coffee and orange trees. It was wrong, though, to call the whole family of the Saüba ant big-headed; it is only the warriors which have those enormously swollen and massive heads—highly polished, like a bit of Egyptian granite or obsidian, in the Worker-major, but opaque and hairy in the subterranean worker; while the real worker, the Worker-minor, who carries the leaves, and feeds the young, and cleans the cells, and in fact does all the useful domestic economy of the nation, is an ordinary ant like any other, varying

in size among themselves, but never hydrocephalic like the two before spoken of. Very extensive are the underground ramifications of this Saüba ant. An enterprising French gardener tried to clear them out of the Botanic Gardens at Pará by blowing sulphur into their galleries; and Mr. Bates says he saw the smoke issue at an outlet seventy yards distant from the place where the bellows were used. The Saüba ant not only clips the leaves off the trees in the free forest, but also acts burglar on its own account, and comes into the house, where it will carry off, grain by grain, any amount of the farinha, or mandioca meal, which makes the bread of the locality. One night, Mr. Bates was awakened by his servant calling out to him that the rats were at his farinha baskets. He got up and listened; but the noise was not that of rats; and when he went into the store-room, he found truly almost a more formidable enemy; for there he confronted a broad column of Saüba ants, each laden with a grain, passing between the door and his precious farinha baskets, the whole contents of which (about two bushels) they would have carried off in that one night had they not been disturbed. Conquered they were not, though killed by thousands; for ever a fresh phalanx walked in to supply their dead comrades' places, and it was only after repeated blowings up by gunpowder—repeated so often that at last the hard heads learnt the lesson and got afraid—that Mr. Bates and his farinha baskets were left in peace. We do not hear how the natives protect themselves against the Saüba ant, but to smear with copaüba balsam everything which they would have to traverse—as cords by which food-baskets are suspended, the legs of chairs and footstools, hammock-ropes, &c.—is the only means of warding off the attacks of another ant pest, the fire-ant, or formiga de fogo, which is the scourge of the Tapajos river—one of the branch rivers of the Amazons.

Another kind is the Eciton, of which let the pedestrian beware; for, should he disregard the twittering and restless flitting hither and thither of small flocks of certain plain-coloured birds (ant-thrushes), in a very few steps he will come to grief, and fall into the midst of the ant-army. They will "swarm up his legs with inconceivable rapidity, each one driving its pincers-like jaws into his skin, and, with the purchase thus obtained, doubling in its tail and stinging with all its might." His only chance then is to run for it—as the natives have done, shouting "Tauóca!" and scampering to the other end of the column—and when safe there he must pick off his ants one by one, more often than not leaving their heads and jaws sticking in his flesh. When the Ecitons are out, the animal and insect worlds are in commotion and dismay. Spiders, caterpillars, maggots, larvæ of all kinds, fall an easy prey to the devouring multitudes: a wasps' nest is rifled with supreme indifference to the stings of the owners, and the larvæ and pupæ apportioned fairly, according to the relative size of the spoil and the spoiler—the large bits to the large Ecitons, and the small bits to the small; and then away they march back to their own home through the entangled thickets, where no one can follow them.

Once, at Villa Nova, Mr. Bates thought he had come upon a migratory horde of this ant; but it was only a foraging party after all, returning home with their spoil—the grubs of another species. It was a dense column of from sixty to seventy yards long, and yet neither van nor rear was visible; all were moving in the same direction save a few isolated individuals on the outside of the column running rearward for a short distance, then wheeling about and trotting on with the main body. These rearward movements were going on everywhere, and seemed to be a way of communicating a common understanding to the army; for the retrograding ants stopped often, to touch some onward-moving comrade with their antennæ, by which they doubtless gave him the password or the signal, or told him the way he was to go. The large-headed fellows of the tribe are singularly conspicuous in these columns. They are as one to about a score of the smaller class; "none of them carried anything in their mouths, but all trotted along empty-handed and outside the column, at pretty regular intervals from each other, like subaltern officers in a marching regiment of soldiers. It was easy to be tolerably exact in this observation, for their shining white heads made them very conspicuous amongst the rest, bobbing up and down as the column passed over the inequalities of the road." They went along quite quietly, not noticing their companions; and when the column was wantonly disturbed they did not show fight or prance forth as eagerly as the others did. What is their specific use to their community, Mr. Bates cannot quite determine. He throws out a suggestion that it may be that of causing indigestion to the ant-thrushes which follow the marching columns and are the most deadly enemies the Ecitons have.

There are many other kinds of these ants; there is the small red Eciton which looks like a deep red liquid flowing over the surface of all it attacks; and there is the blind Eciton, with the link connecting — the Eciton crassicornis which is only half blind, with small eyes sunk in deep sockets—a stout-limbed kind, and not in the smallest degree tamed or mollified by its misfortune. But they are all full of interest in their ways and works; and not the least so when they have laid aside their evil natures and frolic on the sunny ground like so many lambs, or kittens, or pretty little bull-headed puppies; leaping and dancing, and actually washing each other, with lessons in shampooing superadded, wonderful to behold. Even the ant then understands the old adage of all work and no play, and is resolved that the Eciton Jack shall not be a dull boy for want of an occasional holiday.

Full of interest, too, are the monkeys, those poor relations of ours sitting below the salt, as other ragamuffins have done before

them, to the no great delight of the grandees under the dais. First we will speak of that prettiest little creature of all, the Midas; prettiest always, whether it is the Midas rosalia, the silky tamarine, or the Midas leoninus, the lion tamarine—one of the gentlest, most interesting, and most loving little creatures that ever set you wondering whether it was a monkey or a squirrel, or haply some bewitched negro baby, against which some cruel negro fairy had a spite. The little silver tamarine, Midas argentatus, is the most beautiful, as it is the rarest, of the species, and is kept as a choice treasure and most beloved pet when by chance found and taken alive: which is not often, for the creature is by no means common, though sometimes to be seen gambolling like a little snow-white kitten among the branches of the forest trees. It is very small, only seven inches in length when full grown, and is covered with long white silky hairs, with a naked face flesh coloured, and a blackish tail. It is playful, timid, sensitive, and affectionate; can be tamed by love, and for the love of one or two, but never becomes so tame as to be familiar with strangers; in fact, it is just like a timid little child, who knows and loves its nurses, but who shrinks back shyly from even the kindest friend. There are many kinds of Midas, and they are all beautiful, and all gentle, and all playful; differing amongst each other only by the colour of their coats and the size of their bodies, and whether naturalists have called them "lions," or "bears," or "silky," or "silvery." Very different are the ugly rusty-brown Couxios, with their queer hair caps, that look as if they had been just combed and brushed; and the Howlers of all hues, "making night hideous" with their dreadful cries; and the odd, but not wholly unpleasant, scarlet-faced monkeys, dressed in long white coats, with faces of vivid scarlet, and grave and silent as so many judges. But the Parauacá, the bear-like speckled grey Pithecia hirsuta, is too affectionate and intelligent not to be a pet with all who can keep it alive; and the owl-faced night-ape, the Nyctipithecus, clothed in soft grey or brown fur, like rabbit-skin, and with a face like an owl or a tiger-cat, surrounded by a ruff of whitish fur, is also a pet of the first order. It is a funny-looking little creature, very shy at the first, but to be tamed by kindness, when it becomes a source of great amusement—as, indeed, are all the smaller monkeys to those who like them. One, which Mr. Bates kept, used to hide itself in a wide-mouthed glass jar when a stranger entered; but then he did not attempt the system of mere love and liberty adopted by the Brazilians, who make pets of even jaguars, which they suffer to run like puppies free among their children, and who tame their wild monkeys by letting them always sleep in their bosoms, or sit on their heads or shoulders. The little stripe-faced Nyctipithecus which Mr. Bates kept as his vermin catcher in ordinary (this species soon clears a room of cockroaches and spiders, and even of bats), used to bark like a small dog at night—they are night creatures, as their name implies—scampering about the room after the spiders and cockroaches, which it ate with great gusto. It came finally to grief and dissolution through the jealousy of a Caiarára monkey; not a pleasant pet by any means, being restless, jealous, discontented, and noisy, who, quarrelling with poor little owl-face over a fruit that had been given the latter, settled the business by cracking the little one's skull with his teeth—owl-face defending himself only by "clawing out and hissing like a cat," being a meek-minded being, not given to fisticuffs.

But the monkeys must not take up all our time; there are the birds to look at—from the beautiful little humming-bird poised before a flower, or hiding away under the broad leaves of the ferns and forest flowers while it dips itself in a shallow brook and takes its bath in all security of joy, to the strange Umbrella-bird (Cephalopterus ornatus), wearing a third wing on its head, which it can raise and expand at pleasure, throwing it out like a fringed sunshade. Cephalopterus, or wing-head, has a so a neck ornament in the shape of a thick pad of glossy steel-blue feathers, which grows on a long fleshy lobe or excrescence. These two peculiarities are fully developed only in the male, being simply rudimentary in the female. The Indians call it the fife-bird, because of its loud piping note, which Mr. Bates heard; for, after watching an individual in absolute stillness for some time, "it drew itself up on its perch, dilated and waved its glossy breast lappet, and then, in giving vent to its loud piping note, bowed its head slowly forwards." The Crax globicera—a curassow-bird, bearing a round red ball on its beak—is also a strange-looking creature; so is the curl-crested toucan, with his sly magpie-like pate, covered, not by feathers like an ordinary honest bird, but by "thin horny plates of a lustrous black colour, curled up at the ends and resembling shavings of steel or ebony wood, the curly crest being arranged on the crown in the form of a wig." These curl-crested toucans have a note resembling the croaking of a frog; and, according to an anecdote related by our author, it would seem that a scream from one wounded or in distress will bring troops of its fellows to its aid. He had wounded one, and in attempting to seize it, it set up a loud scream. "In an instant, as if by magic, the shady nook seemed alive with these birds, although there was certainly none visible when I entered the thicket. They descended towards me, hopping from bough to bough, some of them swinging on the loops and cables of woody lianas, and all croaking and fluttering their wings like so many furies." When he killed the wounded bird, and its screaming therefore ceased, they all went back to silence and invisibility, disappearing as suddenly as they had appeared. The great clumsy bill of the toucan, which has caused so much discussion, and given rise to so many false theories and still falser facts, is now seen to be a natural adaptation of growth to circumstance. For the toucan, being a fruit-eater, a slow flier,

and a heavy-bodied creature, cannot feed on the wing, and therefore has some trouble to get at the fruits which grow chiefly on the fragile crowns, and at the end of slender twigs and branches of the forest trees; wherefore it perches its fat, dull, heavy person on a stout branch capable of bearing its weight, and then lunges its huge bill forward, and snaps off the bunch it has determined for its dinner. All animals and insects which feed on fruit and flowers must have means to get at these things; so, we find that monkeys use their hands and their tails; humming-birds can hold themselves poised while feeding, as no other bird can; the beautiful trogons, which have feeble wings, sit quietly on the low branches eyeing long the fruits they desire, then dart off, as if with an effort, every time they want a mouthful, and so back to their perch again; and the bill of the toucan, like the neck and lips of the giraffe, stretches itself out in marvellous accord between need and means.

A curious habit among the smaller birds is that of hunting in flocks. Days may pass without a bird being met with in the forests, when suddenly scores and hundreds are fallen upon, including all kinds—woodpeckers, and ant-thrushes, humming-birds, flycatchers, barbets, tanagers, and others, congregated together, but each occupied for and by itself, though all moving in concert, and acted on by an unity of will. Every leaf and twig and square inch of bark is examined; the barbets visiting all the clayey nests of termites on the trees in the line of march; and then, in a few moments, the business has been transacted, the insects have been eaten, and the little fellows twitter and flutter onward, leaving the forest path as silent and deserted as it was a moment ago. The Indians, with all their accurate observations, not seeing that these hunting parties are for the purpose of food, say that the flocks are led by a little grey bird called the Papá-uirá, which fascinates the rest, and leads them a weary dance through the thickets; wherefore they think that if they can but get hold of the skin and feathers of Papá-uirá they will never want for lovers. The hunters receive a high price from the girls for the skins; but Mr. Bates could never learn what the bird was like; and, after the man whom he employed to bring him a Papá-uirá, and who was a noted woodsman, had brought him three different species, he gave up the story and the bird as mere idle humbug.

Impish hordes of vampire bats make a low, dull, fanning sound in the forest as they wave their leathery wings to and fro; but the vampire is a harmless beast, and leaves human creatures alone; it is the little grey blood-sucking Phyllostoma, or leaf-nosed bat, that drains the sleeper's life-blood out at the end of his great toe. Numbers of bats of various kinds are to be found in the daytime clinging to the under-side of palm-leaves, or to the dark trunks of trees, or crouched in the shadow of any broad leaf likely to shield them from observation; but in general they go off to the forest at night to feed, coming back to the village at daylight to sleep, being more secure from their natural enemies there than when in the woods. So numerous are they, that the place where they gather—especially in a room or under cover—is quite blackened by them; they will put out any number of lights, and almost smother the sleeper in his hammock by crawling over him, if they do not bleed him to death.

A short article like this cannot attempt to detail half the pleasant things to be found in two volumes where every page is as rich as a fairy tale in beauty and novelty. Wherefore, all that Mr. Bates has to tell of tortoises and turtles, alligators and snakes, butterflies and flowers, plants and Indians, and manner of life, and climate, and geography, and a hundred other things beside, must be left to the diligence of the reader, to whom this present short abstract will doubtless serve simply as a whet to the fuller satisfaction of curiosity. One thing for which Mr. Bates will not be thanked by certain persons, is the humiliating discovery which his book forces on us, that all our manuals and encyclopædias of natural history are quite wrong and defective, and that a new issue ought to be at once undertaken to include his eight thousand new species, and all the information he has to give concerning his old ones.

AN UNFORTUNATE PRINCESS.

On a certain March evening in the year of Our Lord 1751, Frederick Prince of Wales, son of George the Second and father of George the Third, died at his house in Leicester-fields, in the arms of Desnoyers, a French dancing-master who had been called in to soothe the last tremendous moments of the royal spendthrift with the twang of his favourite violin. On the 13th of the June following, his widow gave birth to a baby princess, known to history as Caroline Matilda, the beautiful, imprudent, and unfortunate Queen of Denmark, about whose guilt or innocence there has been almost as much controversy as about that of Mary Stuart, and with as little likelihood of ever coming to a distinct and certain conclusion. The Princess of Wales was a stern-mannered, though in reality a loving and careful mother; still, so stern that once, when the little Duke of Gloucester was sitting deep in melancholy thought, and she asked him sharply what he was thinking of, he was able to answer, "I was thinking that if ever I have a son I will not make him as unhappy as you make me."

Caroline Matilda, it is to be supposed, bore her share with the rest; but we hear nothing of her life until the fatal year arrived when, at the age of fifteen, she found herself first the betrothed, and then the wife, of a fair-haired, undersized, gay-tempered, handsome, dissolute young scamp of seventeen, Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark. "Diminutive as if he came out of a kernel in the fairy tales," with, adds Walpole, in another place, "the sublime strut of his grandfather (or a cock sparrow)."

The young queen was in her fresh girlhood;

fair almost to a marvel, with light flaxen hair, shining like silver and of luxuriant growth, large, clear, bright, blue eyes, full red lips—the under one rich and pouting—small teeth white and even, and of a temper as bright and sweet as her face: lovely and fascinating enough surely to have made her lover for life the young profligate who kissed her publicly at Roeskilde when they met—perhaps moved for the moment by the sight of her girlish beauty—but who soon taught her what was the real worthlessness of his kisses, and of what infinite power of subdivision the instinct which it pleased his royal majesty to call love, was capable. For the marriage feast was scarcely cold, when Christian found "Milady," or "Katherine of the Pretty Feet"—about whose life the less said the better—a companion more congenial to his taste than the young English princess, whose soul was as pure as her face was fair. And not only "Milady," but all the roués and demireps to be met with in Copenhagen, to the scandal of decent people and the destruction of public morals.

Caroline Matilda found her Danish crown more thickly set with thorns than roses. Young as she was, and so sadly needing careful guidance, she had not a friend in her new home to direct or uphold her. Juliana Maria, the king's stepmother, had always been his declared enemy (even, so Christian believed, to his attempted destruction), because of her own son Frederick, who would come to the throne could the crown prince, as he was then, be destroyed; so that she was the poor young queen's enemy too, ex officio if not by personal dislike, and laid snares and digged pitfals whenever and wherever she could; the old grandmother, Sophia Magdalena, was kind enough, but even she cared more for power than for the right, and had spent her life in trying to keep her personal influence paramount in Danish politics; and the Princess Charlotte Amelia, the king's aunt—who seems to have been about the best of the set—lived only for religious practices and charities, keeping as far out of the reach of her royal nephew as she could, having been his favourite butt and the object of his rudest practical jokes time out of mind.

The final cause of her withdrawal from the palace was "a fright she received through the king's first page crawling into the dining-room on all fours, disguised as a savage."

So Caroline Matilda was absolutely unfriended, save by the Grand Mistress of her household, Frau von Plessen; and she, though a virtuous woman and so far desirable in a court where even common propriety was at a discount, was a harsh-tempered domineering old-maidish kind of person, who made bad, worse, by injudicious advice, and by never being able to understand that sometimes it is better to drive with a slack rein and a silken lash than with tight ropes and a leathern thong. Influenced by this clever lady, Caroline Matilda put on an air of forbidding coldness to her husband (perhaps it was not much trouble to do that), with the idea, so common among women, and so mistaken, that the best way to secure a husband's vagrant affections is to deny or conceal their own. In this case, however, it was not so much concealment as confession, for the young queen had no great fondness for her royal spouse; as, indeed, how could she have? Unless neglect, debauchery, and open infidelity were qualities calculated to win the love and esteem of a girl-wife virtuously educated. Nevertheless, she nursed him assiduously when he had the scarlet fever; and when he recovered, he went back to his street-rows, his mistresses, his low pot-house riots, his assaults on the watch, and all the other disgraceful doings which made him the disgust and the talk of Europe.

The royal favourite in chief at this time was Count Conrad von Holck, lately appointed Court Marshal, but acting as a kind of private M.C. to the monarch, arranging all the court balls and fêtes: also helping him in pleasures less innocent. He it was who accompanied Christian to and from Milady's house, "during which street riots were but too frequent;" who shared in all his vices, and who organised many a nocturnal orgie during the brilliant luncheons which he was in the habit of giving at Blaagaard, a kind of castellated pleasure-house, just outside the north gate. And even when the queen gave birth to a son—the future Frederick the Sixth—and all Denmark went mad with joy; always excepting the queen-dowager, Juliana Maria, whose son was thus doubly barred; even then, Christian and his favourite continued their excesses, and made the whole town ring with the echo of their misdeeds. Christian was seen one day in broad daylight returning from "Milady's" in a state of intoxication, the people pursuing him with hootings and insults to his own palace-gates; in a word, the private and public annals of king, court, and favourite, were of the worst kind. At last, however, the ministers arrested Katherine of the Pretty Feet, and put her in prison, after her royal lover had bought her an hotel and created her a baroness.

And now Christian and his court set out on their travels; taking with them, as surgeon and physician in ordinary, John Frederick Struensee, hitherto physician of Altona, and of the lordship of Pinneberg. And first the King of Denmark came here to visit the King of England. But "Farmer George" was not especially eager to favour his brother-in-law; so little eager, indeed, that when Christian came to Dover, he found no royal carriages waiting for him, and had to come to town in hackney-carriages. Even when he got to town, "by another mistake," says Walpole, "King George happened to go to Richmond about an hour before King Christian arrived in London. An hour is exceedingly long, and the distance to Richmond still longer; so with all the despatch which could possibly be made, King George did not get to his capital till next day at noon. Then, as the road from his closet in St. James's to the King of Denmark's apartments on the other side of the palace is about thirty miles (which posterity, having no conception of the prodigious extent and magnificence of St. James's, will never believe), it was half an hour after three before his

Danish majesty's cousin could go and return to let him know that his good brother and ally was leaving the palace (in which they both were) to receive him at the queen's palace, which you know is about a million of snails' paces from St. James's. Notwithstanding these difficulties and unavoidable delays, Woden, Thor, Frigga, and all the gods that watch over the kings of the north, did bring these two invincible monarchs to each other's embraces, about half an hour after four on the same evening."

Christian's life in London was bad enough; but it was even worse in Paris, and the queen was carefully informed of all that would most pain and disquiet her, it being the policy of that nest of intriguers, of which Juliana Maria was the chief, to keep the young couple as far sundered in both life and love as was possible. It was not to be wondered at if she was cold and disdainful and full of wrath and bitterness, when her scampish husband came home after his seven months' tour, and if she resented Count Holck's familiarities and impertinences, and even added the new physician, Struensee, to her black list, as one of the tribe of her enemies. She soon learnt a different lesson, poor girl! Well for her if she had never done so.

But indeed Struensee's policy was at the first quite puzzling enough to mislead her. He wished to reconcile king and queen, he said, and yet he enticed Frau von Gabel into a web of circumstances, compromising in appearance and fatal in the end. This Frau von Gabel was a high-minded noble-hearted woman, almost a republican in her political creed and therefore unable to live at court, but, whether royalist or republican, patriot before all. The king had made certain advances to her in times gone by, which it is scarcely necessary to say were repulsed; but now Struensee took up the dropped loops, and, assuring Frau von Gabel that the king was in every way reformed, and that he did really need her ennobling influence to keep him in the right way, urged her to admit his visits again—she, the Egeria to his Numa. Frau von Gabel consented; but soon found that all this talk of Christian's great improvement was mere moonshine; he was as bad as ever, and a little more mad; and the character of Egeria was soon sought to be brought down to a lower level and to baser purposes. When she found this out, and deception was no longer possible, the poor lady died of grief; and the strange intrigue about which no satisfactory theory as to why it was, and to what use, came to an end. She died, hating Struensee: whom the queen hated too, for his share in the plot.

At that time, then, there was no love between the doctor and the queen; but soon after this, the crown prince—her little baby—had the small-pox, and old enmities were forgotten in the new conditions of help and trust this set up between them. Ever after this illness Caroline Matilda admitted Struensee into her intimate friendship; and so began the drama which ended in a cruel and a bloody tragedy. She was imprudent to an almost insane extent; she drove out alone with the handsome young doctor, walked with him alone, rode with him alone; at the court balls she danced chiefly with him, and suffered him to address her in a tone of temper and command, to say the least of it, astounding. These follies, and more to the back of them, got the young queen much ill will, and caused many a biting comparison to be instituted between her and Mary Stuart, with Struensee for Rizzio. Together with her character, whether rightfully or wrongfully, the queen began to lose something of her sweet English modesty, and to play unwomanly pranks in public quite as damaging as vices. She hunted daily, bestriding her horse in man fashion, and dressed as a man in "a dove coloured beaver hat with a deep gold band and tassels, a long scarlet coat faced with gold all round, a buff gold laced waistcoat, frilled shirt, man's neckerchief, and buckskin small-clothes and spurs. She looked splendidly when mounted and dashing through the woods, but when she dismounted the charm was to a great degree dispelled, for she appeared shorter than she really was; the shape of her knees betrayed her sex, and her belt seemed to cut her in two." At other times, when dressed like a woman, she was one of the most beautiful women of her time.

Struensee's political power was as great as his personal influence. The whole power of the state seemed to be vested in him: the queen being his tool, the king his victim, and the country his mere footstool whereby he might mount to supreme honour. All Europe began to talk. Then the talk got so loud that the Princess of Wales, Caroline Matilda's mother, made a long and toilsome journey northward, which, whatever the political motives assigned, seemed to have for its motive simply to see her daughter, and to remonstrate with her on her folly. Not that she herself came into court with clean hands; for the position of Lord Bute in her royal household had long been a favourite subject for scandal and satire. The meeting took place after some delay, and the mother's resolute removal of certain obstacles thrown in the way by Caroline Matilda; but no good was done. The king and queen came attended only by Struensee and Warnstedt, the favourite page, who were seated in the carriage with them; and when the Princess of Wales spoke to her daughter in English, she pretended not to understand her—she had forgotten the language! In fact, she showed herself as wayward and unmanageable as a naughty child who cannot be reasoned with and who will not be controlled. Letters and envoys from both mother and brother (George III.) were received in the same manner; and thus the last drags sought to be put upon the downward course were knocked aside, and the royal lady's repute went on towards destruction.

What was it which, at about this time, made her write with a diamond on the window-pane at Frederiksborg, "Oh keep me innocent, make others great"? Conscience? Sorrow for past, or fear of future, sins? Or was it simply dissimulation, and the endeavour to deceive eyes whose

sharpness of vision was, she well knew, spying out her weak places and gauging her misdoings? For we cannot for a moment accept Sir Lascelles Wraxall's theory, and account her innocent in her relations with Struensee;* every incident related and every induction to be drawn, point but to one thing; and whatever the political basis, whatever the greater worth of the Dano-Germanic alliance against that of the Russian, and the zeal of the physician-minister for his own ideas and his own views of statecraft, the question between the man and woman remains the same for both and all concerned. Unhappily for the half-mad, half-bad king, who, when Struensee dismissed honest old Bernstorff, had not a friend left. Given up to Struensee and the queen, he was now simply a puppet and a prisoner, with two black children—a boy and a girl—for his only companions, and Enevold Brandt, whom he hated, for his valet, chamberlain, pedagogue, and master—Enevold Brandt, whom Holck had exiled and Struensee restored. In truth, Christian's condition was pitiable enough. Grant that he was mad, still the manner of life to which his wife and the minister doomed him was infamous. No one paid him the smallest respect, and once an impudent page even drove him into a corner, saying, "Mad Rex, make me a groom of the chamber." He was compelled to make personal appointments of men specially distasteful to him; and on one occasion, in revenge for having been made to sign an appointment as chamberlain for a man he hated, he made one of his stove-heaters a chamberlain; again, another time, he gave out that his dog Gourmand was a "Conference Councillor," and proposed his health, which the rest were obliged to acknowledge as de rigueur. This was to express his disgust at certain fault-finding and scolding which he had to submit to in council, showing that, as barking was the rule of the day there, Gourmand could bark as well as any of them, and so was quite as efficient a conference councillor. His chief amusement was smashing china and beheading the garden statues: in which odd play Moranti, his black boy, assisted him. For a change, he would roll on the ground with the boy, biting and scratching him, or would fling papers, furniture, books, glass, ornaments, anything he could find, over the balcony down into the court-yard: once wishing to fling the boy and dog Gourmand after the rest. In public he was treated with contempt by his keeper, Brandt, who in private bit and beat him—he said by the king's own desire; and, indeed, the whole treatment of this unhappy wretch, during the reign of Struensee, was as damaging to the queen's repute as it was disgraceful and degrading.

The queen, influenced by Struensee, who, however, was loyally well intentioned in this, brought up her son on the wildest principles of "hardening"—a kill or cure system indeed for a delicate child. His food was of the simplest and poorest kind, and what we should call innutritious, and always cold; he had a cold bath twice or thrice a day; he was kept in a cold room without a fire, dressed lightly in thin silk, and went about barefoot, although he was a delicate baby of not quite three years old. His playmate and companion was a little fellow of his own age, called "little Karl," the natural son of a surgeon, who was allowed to fight with him and master him if he could, no one being suffered to assist or prevent. The queen was so severe with him, that when the attendants wanted to frighten him into good behaviour, they used to threaten to take him to his mother, which generally succeeded. Struensee's coadjutor, the physician Berger, got a few of the more extreme rules relaxed; and, owing to his representations, this royal baby was allowed to wear shoes and stockings, to be rather more warmly clad, to have his rice boiled in broth instead of water, to have meat soup for dinner twice a week, and to have his room slightly warmed in the morning.

And now popular feeling began to take a very decided tone, and the ministry knew that the evil hour which has to come to all misdoers, was drawing near. The queen and the favourite dared not show themselves in public; the guards were doubled at the palace, and various unusual precautions were taken; the most abominable satires and caricatures were printed and circulated, or stuck or scrawled on the walls; half in jest and half in earnest; the queen and the ministers would speculate on their future lives, and what they should do when the crash came and they were forced to fly—they foresaw nothing worse; and all this while the indignation of the people and the anger of the European courts became louder and deeper, and of more ominous intensity and fierceness. Anonymous letters were sent to Brandt, advising him to put himself out of danger by ranging himself on the king's side, and against the minister; and he and Struensee had misunderstandings, even to the extent of the former proposing a kind of coup d'état to Falckenskjold, one of the government, beginning and ending in the arrest of Struensee, and the transfer of the queen to himself; and then the great plot was arranged, headed by Juliana Maria and Prince Frederick her son, the king's half-brother.

The favourite's treatment of this young man had been most impolitic. Insulted, neglected, irritated, his rank and near relationship with the king ignored or remembered only to fix a deeper sting, no wonder that he put himself at the head of a party determined to rid the country of a group of adventurers who had lost their heads when they had gained the top round of the ladder, and whose so-called reforms were neither popular nor understood, besides being nullified by the poison of the scandals attached to them. When a forged document was shown to Juliana Maria (at least, Sir Lascelles Wraxall says it was forged), wherein it was set forth how that the king was to be forced to abdicate, and how that the queen was to be declared regent with Struensee as pro-

* Life and Times of Her Majesty Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark and Norway. By Sir C. F. Lascelles Wraxall, Bart.

tector—meaning, as it was argued to her, that the king and crown prince were to be murdered, Struensee married to the queen, and his children by her set on the throne—she felt that no time was to be lost, and that either she and hers must fall, or they. Means were not wanting, nor agents, nor adherents; they never are wanting when a tumult is contemplated, and good pickings are to be had out of a ruined palace; and the right time came with the rest. After a certain masked ball, where the queen had been most remarkably gay and most strikingly beautiful, and where, by the strange falling to pieces of a certain supper, all things were marvellously facilitated, the plot came to its culmination. The ex-queen, her son, and some others (Guldberg, Rantzau, Eickstedt, Köller, and the ex-valet Jessen), entered the king's bedroom at dead of night, where they first nearly frightened him to death, and then got him to sign orders for the arrest of Struensee, Brandt, Falckenskjold, the queen, and others of minor moment. One by one those named were arrested and secured; and so was broken up in a few moments the coalition which had changed the whole face of Danish politics and the whole current of Danish society, for two years.

Struensee, never a brave man, though so daring in political action, first fainted, then took to swearing horribly, and then gave way to abject despair. Brandt was philosophical, and even gay. Falckenskjold was calm and critical. But the poor young queen was impassioned and terrified, full of wrath and fear and desperation and anguish: now struggling with the soldiers whom Rantzau had with him to secure her; now trying to hurl herself from the open window, shrieking wildly for Struensee and the king; finally borne away to the fortress of Kronborg, ruined and disgraced for ever. Young, lovely, with a good and noble nature that had been at first outraged and afterwards misguided, we cannot but pity her. Truly she had sinned in her degree; but she had been sinned against more grievously, and her wrong-doing had been retaliation rather than aggression. For, as was said before, we cannot accept Sir Lascelles Wraxall's theory of her innocence, though her failings may be tenderly excused for the sake of the evils she had undergone.

The end soon came. Struensee, pressed and threatened, confessed to his liaison with the queen, circumstantially detailed; and when the queen was shown his confession, and told that if she denied it he would be tortured, she signed it in attestation of its truth, and so signed away her good fame for ever. He was executed, with certain barbarous circumstances disgraceful to the time and people: having first seen his colleague Brandt decapitated and disembowelled before his face; Falckenskjold was sentenced to be confined on the rock of Munkholm for life. Caroline Matilda was removed from Kronborg to the castle of Aalborg, where she was kept a prisoner until released at the instance of England. Thence, she went to Celle, or Zell, the old residence of the former Dukes of Lüneburg, where she lived happily enough, much beloved by all who knew her, and cheered by the frequent presence of her sister, the Princess of Brunswick. Her only grief was the loss of her children, especially of the little girl—whose legitimacy, by-the-by, came under grave suspicion; but the king had formally acknowledged her at her birth. Here she saw Mr. Wraxall, the grandfather of her present apologist, then a young man, "just her own age," and who seems to have been greatly struck by her beauty, and interested in her fortunes. He describes her as very beautiful, though too fat; like her brother George the Third in feature, but harmonised and softened; charitable, gay, sweet-tempered, and discreet—all that the wronged princess should be.

Mr. Wraxall entered into the plot for her release, which had as its object, the arrest of Juliana Maria and Prince Frederick, and the king's published order for her return to Copenhagen. It is impossible to guess what new historic complications might have arisen had she not, in the midst of this under-current, died on the 11th of May, 1775, wanting less than three months of her twenty-fourth year. Of course people said she died of poison, that wide and convenient vagueness; but in truth it was of scarlet fever, taking a typhoid character, and easy to be accounted for. One of her young pages had just died of this disease, and she, very foolishly, went into the room where the coffin was, and looked at the dead body. The sight haunted her, and the disease found her out, carrying her off in a very few days. When dying, she wrote to George the Third, solemnly protesting her innocence of all with which she had been charged; and also to M. Roques, the pastor of the French Protestant church at Zell, she said the same: "I was never faithless to my husband." So, at least, it is reported. Whether Sir Lascelles Wraxall's chivalrous theory respecting the unhappy princess be correct or not, the memoir has high merits, not only as an historical, but as a literary production. Some of the details of court life are extremely curious.

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QUITE ALONE.

BOOK THE SECOND: WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER XLII. LILY IS SEIZED.

LILY was in haste now to leave those Elysian Fields, which had exercised so strange a fascination over her. She was haunted by the eyes of that painted woman. She wandered about for full an hour she knew not whither; dazed by the coloured lamps, the crowds, the shouts, the braying of bands; the hoarse rhetoric of the mountebanks, the roaring of the cannon, which were to usher in the fireworks. She sought vainly for an outlet from the saturnalia; but the crowd compassed her about, and hemmed her in, and on its remotest borders there seemed to be more shows and more crowds.

She was almost in despair when, thinking to gain the Place de la Concorde, and in view, even, of the great obelisk, which from base to apex was one blaze of light, she found herself wedged in a mass of sight-seers who were gathered round the carriage of a quack doctor. Lily had never seen the Elisir d'Amore, but there, as large as life was Doctor Dulcamara. He had deviated a little from the costume on which the late admirable Lablache conferred well-merited fame, inasmuch as over his well-powdered periwig he wore a Roman helmet of brass, with a tremendous plume of crimson horsehair; but the scarlet coat, the frills, the ruffles, the top-boots, the buckskin, the watch and pendulous seals, the snuff-box, the signet-ring, and the gold-headed cane, all belonged to the opera. He was an impudent vagabond, at best; but had the flow of flashy verbiage common to his tribe, and scores of hands were speedily extended from the crowd beneath him, holding francs and half francs to be exchanged for the worthless nostrums he extolled so highly.

His calèche, and the white horse that drew it, to boot, were quite a bower of Chinese lanterns; and in the rumble sat his servant, who was attired as a drum-major in the Imperial Guard, whose business it was to be the butt of his master's jokes, and grind the barrel-organ when Dulcamara was out of breath. The under quack was a fellow of cadaverous traits and discontented mien, and appeared heartily ashamed of his position. He had reason to be. He was the real doctor. His diploma and license to practise were duly certified by the Faculty of Paris, and without them Dulcamara would have been hauled to prison as a swindler: but the genuine physician being poor and idle, and dissolute and drunken, the quack was content to pay him so much a year to use his diploma; and he filled up his leisure time by grinding the barrel-organ. "On demande un médecin pour voyager." Have you never seen that advertisement in Les Petites Affiches? It means that Dulcamara the quack is in want of an organ-grinder with a diploma.

"Approach, my children," the mountebank was bawling. "Approach, lose no time. I have but a few moments to bestow upon you. I am wanted elsewhere. Kings and princesses sigh for my presence. Spanish hidalgos, who have eaten too much olla podrida—English milords, agonised by the spleen—refuse to be comforted without me. Grand Biribi—(this to the melancholy man with the diploma)—strike up the chanson à boire from Robert le Diable. After that we shall have something to say about the Imperial Soporific and Atomic Tincture of Honolulu."

An hour ago, in her recklessness, Lily might have been for a moment detained by the loquacity of this bombastic humbug. But it was too late now. The awful consciousness of her miserable position had come upon her; and some inward voice kept thundering in her ears that she was in danger—from she knew not what; and that she must fly—she knew not where.

Exerting more strength than she had imagined she possessed, she contrived, at last, to disengage herself from the throng, and to reach a space which was less encumbered. She leant up against a tree, sick and faint. Her poor eyes were blinded with tears. Her strength had broken down. Her enterprise seemed to her, now, impossible of accomplishment. That dreadful fever was racking her head again. Heaven be merciful to her—what had she done, and what was she to do?

"Pretty little demoiselle, you seem ill," a voice behind her said.

She had heard the voice before. It was that of the man who had declared that all weapons and umbrellas must be left at the door. She turned her head, trembling, and saw the Italian waxwork showman.

"Aha! you recognise me, then?" continued Signor Ventimillioni. "Do you know that I have been looking for you this half-hour?"

"I do not know you," faltered Lily. "Good night!"

"Not so fast, picciolina mia. We are not to part in such a hurry." And the Italian laid his hand on Lily's arm.

"Let me go! let me go!" cried the terrified girl. "Let me go home."

"Precisely, that is where I am going to take you. There is a lady at home who is expecting you most anxiously. You have kept her waiting a very long time. Whole years. Home indeed. Aha! you little runaway!"

He tightened his grasp. He passed the other hand round her waist. Lily tried to scream, when, suddenly some loose garment was thrown over her head, and another pair of hands were clasped over her mouth.

"Enough of this trifling," grumbled very hoarsely a man who had been lurking a few paces behind the Italian during his parley with Lily. "Come, my Phidias of the painting-room, bring the young toad along, or some sergent de ville will be passing by."

"Don't smother her, Demosthène," remonstrated the Italian. "Take the cloak off her head, and your hands off her mouth, and let us try to make her listen to reason. Des convenances, mon garçon; n'oublions jamais les convenances."

The second man did, sulkily, as he was bid, but he planted his great hands on Lily's shoulders, and kept them there. The girl was too terrified to speak; but palpitated in the grasp of the two ruffians like a captured bird.

"Listen to me, ma mie," went on the Italian, putting his face so close to Lily that she could feel his beard upon her cheek; "you are coming home with us. You are our prisoner, if you like that tournure de phrase better. Come quietly, and no harm will be done you; but dare to call for assistance, and I will put this pretty little bodkin into you."

He drew, as quick as lightning, a long knife that glittered in the lamplight. Lily saw that she was lost. She could hear the distant hum of the crowd, and the clanging of the music; but the spot was solitary, and she was beyond all human help.

"Will you be quiet, then?" the Italian asked, half caressingly, half threateningly.

Lily murmured a faint affirmative.

"That's right. Now, Demosthène, let us take her between us. Don't forget that little bright bodkin of mine, little one."

The two strong men hooked their arms in those of the girl, and led her rapidly away. They plunged into an alley between the trees, and which seemed entirely deserted. But as though in mockery at her utter wretchedness and state of bondage, she saw gleaming from behind the tufted trees the first sparkle of the fireworks, those fireworks which were to culminate in a resplendent bouquet, in which Liberty was to have her annual apotheosis, and the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth of July to be made glorious for ever.

They were now walking by the water-side. That it was the Seine Lily knew, for she could see the lamps on the Pont Louis Seize, and the Chamber of Deputies flaring with lampions. They stopped before a mean wooden building, having seemingly but one window, through whose dirty panes a light feebly glimmered.

The Italian pushed at the door, which gave way, and they passed in. There was a narrow passage, and by the light of a swinging cresset Lily could see a woman who was rushing towards her—a woman huddled in an old plaid shawl, whose hair was dishevelled, and whose face was painted. It was the Wild Woman of the Elysian Fields.

CHAPTER XLIII. THE SULTAN IN LONDON.

What is a year? Psha! what are ten? When you are young, a year seems a very long time. That last month before you are twenty-one, or before you leave school, or get your commission, or pass your examination for the civil service, the month it takes for your moustaches to grow, how it lags, how it loiters, how every moment seems to have its feet clogged by leaden weights! Do our best as we may to squander the days in recklessness and prodigality, what a weary time elapses before we are thirty years of age, and fogies cease to tell us that, as young men, we should defer to the opinion of our elders. Never was there, perhaps, a sane woman of twenty-nine who passed herself off as thirty-one; but how often does a young middle-aged man slily add on a year or two? But hey! when the mezzo cammen is reached, how swiftly the years fly! We lose count. Sixty-two melts into sixty-three, and that into sixty-four, without our special notice. Things pass as in a dream. The day before yesterday, why, it was eighteen months ago. Our newly-formed acquaintance, why we have known him these eight years. The far-off goal of grey hairs, and toothlessness, and the tomb, why we are close upon it. It was a tedious pull to Tattenham Corner; it is a lightning rush to the judge's stand, even if we come in with the ruck.

A year had passed since the events previously narrated. Madame de Kergolay was dead. She passed away very peacefully, leaving the bulk of that which she possessed to her beloved grand-nephew, Edgar Greyfaunt. It was not much, but it was a capital to be turned into ready money, and that was all the young man wanted. It is due to the memory of the good old lady in Paris to state that she freely forgave poor little Lily before her death. Her ire, indeed, against the girl had lasted but a very short time. She had been shocked and pained by her disappearance, and had made every effort to gain tidings of her, but in vain. By degrees the vengeful pride which had led her to crush

Lily with cruel words, because she had dared to love the sultan, her grand-nephew, gave way to her natural kindness and softness of heart. She wept and bewailed the fugitive. She would have sacrificed much to recover her. She acknowledged that Lily's love had been blameless. But she was gone, and would return no more.

The abbé, as in duty bound, informed Mademoiselle Marcassin of Lily's flight, and of the unavailing steps that had been taken to discover her hiding-place.

The Marcassin did not take the intelligence much to heart.

"I expected it," she remarked, coldly. "I, who am the greatest sufferer by the absconding of this vaurienne, would not spend three francs ten sous in an advertisement in the Petites Affiches to get her back. There are cats and cockatoos whom one is glad to lose, Monsieur l'Abbé. You and your Madame de Kergolay were entichés de cette petite friponne. Now she has robbed you as she robbed me, and has doubtless fled to join the swindler, her mother, with whom for years she has probably been in secret correspondence. Ah, ces Anglaises, ces Anglaises! c'est de la perfidie à en croire à la fin du monde. You had much better, instead of petting and spoiling her, have put her into a Maison de Discipline, where she would have been fed on bread and water, and whipped twice a week. The Sœurs Grises have an excellent institution at Auteuil. You say that she did not take her clothes with her. Has your noble duenna counted her spoons since the flight of her darling?"

"I don't think the poor little child is dishonest," the abbé urged, in mild deprecation. He was a good man, after all, and much troubled in his mind about Lily.

"Bah!" sneered the inflexible Marcassin. "You take the whole world to be inhabited by candidates for the Prize of Virtue. Une fameuse Rosière elle ferait celle-là! The trumpery little thing was innately and incorrigibly bad. Mauvaise herbe, I tell you, Monsieur l'Abbé mauvaise herbe."

And Madame de Kergolay died. To her two faithful servants she left a small but adequate provision, much to the distaste of Edgar; but of the rest he was sole legatee. Vieux Sablons and Prudence faded away almost as quietly as their mistress from the stage. The old man did not survive madame many months. He expressed, before he died, his wish to be buried in Père la Chaise, in the same grave with his beloved mistress, but crosswise, at her feet, as became an ancient and faithful but humble servitor. The abbé did his best to have his wish fulfilled; but there were difficulties in the way: the administration was not propitious, and Vieux Sablons had to be buried as many millions of his forerunners had been buried before him. It did not so much matter, perhaps. He was bound, let us hope, to a country where there is but One Master, in whose eyes superiors and servitors are alike.

Edgar Greyfaunt, after passing a decent period in retirement at Aix-les-Bains—his great-aunt had died towards the close of the summer—where his exceedingly fashionable mourning, his jet studs and wrist-buttons, and the coal-black steed he rode, were deservedly admired, came back to Paris, settled accounts with Madame de Kergolay's notary—whom he accused, at many stages of their business transactions, of robbing him, and who did him the honour to remark, as he handed him the last packet of thousand-franc notes accruing from the dead lady's succession, that with a more heartless young man he had never come in contact—and called in an upholsterer from the Rue St. Louis, to whom, after a parley of ten minutes, he sold en bloc the entire furniture and fittings of his relative's apartments in the Marais: tapestry, china, pictures and all. "I do not want this rococo stuff," he said, candidly. "I was in England not many months since, and am returning there; and if I require brics-à-bracs I can get as many as I need in Wardour-street at cheaper rates than here."

The upholsterer handed three thousand francs to the Sultan Greyfaunt, and sent a couple of vans to carry away all the poor old lady's penates, which were worth six thousand at least. Big men in blouses dragged the faded Cupids, and shepherdesses, and bewigged gentlemen with the cross of St. Louis, down stairs. Gentil Bernard lay for a time in the gutter, and Babet la Bouquetière was calmly contemplated by a chiffonnier. A part of the furniture went very soon to decorate the rooms of a lorette, in the Rue Taitbout. When she had quarrelled with the English milord, through her over-weening partiality for the Brazilian coffee-planter, who turned out to be a swindler from Hamburg, she had a lavage, or sale of her knick-knacks, and some of Madame de Kergolay's penates were sold to the Jews, and some were bought by painters to increase the "properties" of their studios withal. Then in process of time they got burnt, or broken up, or pawned and sold and pawned again, or exported to America or Australia. Which is the way of the world, and not at all uncommon.

But the first van-load of goods had scarcely left the house of the deceased before Edgar Greyfaunt was snugly ensconced in the coupé of the diligence on his way to Calais. He began to think his mourning very hot and shabby looking. He must have an entirely new wardrobe when he reached London. Those French tailors did not know how to fit an English gentleman. Willis or Nugee should be honoured with his patronage. He was about to assume his proper position in society. He was destined to shine there, that was certain. He had an ancient name, a handsome presence, and a fortune. Yes, quite a fortune. In a letter of credit on a London banking firm he was entitled to draw for no less a sum than five thousand pounds sterling. That was his entire capital—a hundred and twenty-five thousand francs. It sounded magnificent. Reduced to English sterling, it

had not quite so sonorous a ring, but still with a great deal of spending in it. In his whole life the sultan had never grasped so much money. His treasure seemed to him inexhaustible. He would live largely, luxuriously he thought, but then he would be adding to his capital. Was there not the turf; might not he, a young gentleman of fashion and fortune, make a figure there, and win thousands by betting? How much would it cost to have a stud of racehorses? And play! there was play. Hitherto, certainly, he had but rarely had a run of luck; but Fortune favours the bold, and he would have no need to distress himself about the loss of a few paltry hundreds of francs. And, if the worst came to the worst, was he not an artist? Had he not a commanding genius? Most commanding. Certainly, at no very distant date the portals of the English Royal Academy must open for his admission. But there would be plenty of time to take up with painting again. It was the last resource. To tell truth, he felt slightly ashamed of the easel and maulstick, now that he was an independent gentleman, with his pocket full of money. After all, it was but a base mechanical employment this painting. How villanously the turpentine and megelp smelt. How difficult it was to find subjects; what a bore it was to have to make sketches. And those troublesome models—they cost ever so much money, and the colour merchant was always dunning for his bill. Those envious ill-conditioned fellows the critics, too, who made impertinent observations in print for which, if they got their deserts, they should be caned, and who drew no distinction between a picture painted by the son of a cobbler and one that was the work of a descendant of the barons of old.

Of course Edgar put up at the Ship when he landed at Dover—the Lord Warden not being then built—and although he had the largest suite of apartments next to a Russian grand-duke who had crossed with him, the Ship was several sizes too small for the Sultan Greyfaunt. He would have posted to London had not the railway just been opened. He could never have endured a vulgar stage-coach.

He had plenty of friends, and some few distant connexions in London. It was known that he was Madame de Kergolay's heir. Nobody knew much about the old lady's circumstances, nor did the sultan feel called upon to enlighten society with any particularity. It was noised abroad that he had inherited a large fortune; nor did he take any special pains to contradict the rumour. If people chose to deceive themselves, why should they not be deceived? A convenient train of reasoning, which has been pursued in all countries, these five thousand years about.

So where, when the sultan arrived in the British metropolis, should his highness alight but at Pomeroy's Hotel in Great Grand-street, Grosvenor-square? He drove there straight from the terminus, and was received with much distinction. One had need be a distinguished foreigner to be welcomed in Great Grand-street. As a rule, Pomeroy (represented by a sharp Swiss named Jean Baptiste Constant, the successor to the original proprietor; he having retired on a fortune) only took in princes; and, equally as a rule, princes, when they came to town, were taken by their couriers to Pomeroy's. Mr. J. B. Constant (he was never called Monsieur now, and was supposed to be a naturalised British subject, and a staunch Protestant, the which did not prevent his entertaining the Sheikh of the Soudan, who was a Mussulman, and the Abbeokuta Envoy, who was black and a pagan, and was with difficulty persuaded from celebrating his "grand custom" over a footbath full of blood in the back drawing-room; besides any stray Romanist or Russo-Greek grandees who came that way)—Mr. J. B. Constant owed much of the success which he had hitherto enjoyed to his extended connexion among the useful class of travelling servants known as couriers, who, when out of an engagement, or off duty, were always sure of a hearty reception, a good cigar, and a glass of curaçao, or other comforting stimulant in Pomeroy's still-room. The recommendations of an experienced member of the courier profession, one Franz Stimm had been especially useful to Mr. Constant, and he was grateful to him accordingly.

Mr. Edgar Greyfaunt de Kergolay was therefore, as was only due to so high and mighty a prince, made much of at this patrician hostelry. On his cards he called himself Greyfaunt de Kergolay; and his name was surmounted by a neatly engraved and prettily spiked coronet. During the lifetime of his great-aunt, and in Paris, he had affected a disdain for his foreign lineage, and would own no blue blood but that of the Greyfaunts of Lancashire; but now that she was dead, and he had got her money, he thought there was no harm in hinting that he was the representative of a noble house from beyond the sea. Perhaps he found the Greyfaunts of Lancashire, like many other country families as noble, somewhat at a discount in London society, which, following the usual fashion, interested itself with what was passing on the extreme horizon in preference to that which was going on beneath its very nose. At all events, the lofty Edgar, when he was addressed as Viscount, did not resent the error with any great acrimony. His old companions called him Greyfaunt; but many newly-found ones in cosmopolitan and diplomatic circles, spoke to him and asked him to dinner as De Kergolay. Under that title he was entered in Mr. J. B. Constant's books; and as De Kergolay he was inscribed, much more legibly, and, indeed, indelibly, in Mr. J. B. Constant's mind.

Thus, and in despite of his English face and tongue, being accounted that which imperfectly educated persons are apt to term a "forcign swell," Edgar—you may call him, and I will call him by either of his surnames indifferently—was naturally introduced to the Pilgrims' Club in Park-lane, at which, as everybody

knows, or ought to know, the ambassadors, the secretaries of legation, and the attachés accredited to the court of St. James's, mingle on a charmingly social footing with sundry illustrious Englishmen, whose qualifications as Pilgrims must be simply these: to have travelled ten thousand miles in a straight direction, and in a given line from the North Pole; to be faultless hands at écarté, piquet, and short whist, and to belong to the cream of the cream of English society, both by wealth, by birth, and by position.

There are always a good many candidates up at the Pilgrims' Club—where gentlemen's names are put down when they are infants in arms, with a view to their entering the club at their grand climacteric;—but as failures in one of the three grand and essential requisites are sometimes unavoidable, the rejection of candidates at the Pilgrims' Club (which is, I think, near the Piccadilly end of Park-lane) is not by any means of rare occurrence. Indeed, they say there is more blackballing at the P. (the affectionate diminutive of Pilgrim) than at any other club in London: always excepting the Ostrich in Sandys-street, Deseret-square. There, you know, they pilled Sir Eurasius Quihi for his loose notions on the subject of suttee, and all but ostracised brave old Admiral Sindbad, because he was known to maintain that curry was better without chutnee than with it. For distinctions must be made, it is plain, to keep society select—which would otherwise degenerate into a mere anarchical Odd Fellows' gathering of the most ungenteel description: and it is a good and holy thing to be exclusive. Thus, as you see, the Pilgrims had secured the very cream of the cream in their English memberhood.

Well, and the foreigners. One must make allowances for foreigners, of course. If Baron Burstoff, Minister Plenipotentiary from Crim Tartary, had formerly been simply a Hebrew money-changer at Frankfort-on-the-Maine (the letters we used to have from him about the Imperial High Dutch lottery, and urging us forthwith to invest in that swindle, and win a castle on the Rhine, the title of Count, and the entire library of the late lamented Puffendorff!); if old Professor Stradivarius from Jena, the distinguished philologist and translator of the poems of Saadi into the Zummerzetzhire dialect, and the Post-Office London Directory of eighteen hundred and forty-two into Syro-Chaldaic, was the son of a tripe-dealer at Magdeburg, and had, in early life followed the humble trade of a tailor; and if that famous traveller, Marcus Rolopolus, Ph.D., R.G.S., &c. &c., had been assistant-keeper of a wild beast show (travelling, and occasionally varied by the beefeater business outside), a dealer in stuffed birds in the vicinity of Goodman's-fields, and the proprietor of a sailors' boarding-house at Gibraltar, before he discovered the site of the lost city of Alesia, brought back the original pleadings of the Abderites in the great lawsuit of the ass's shadow, and made it manifest to the entire world that the wild Wangdoodlums do *not* eat human flesh when roast hippopotamus is procurable; and that they *do* knock out their front teeth to be the better able to whistle their native airs—if the savants and the illustrious strangers who were made free of the P., and nearly threw the waiters into fits by spitting on the carpet of the morning-room, were sometimes of mean extraction, and occasionally of coarse manners, and now and then humbugs, the great principle of exclusiveness was at least outwardly vindicated. Once a Pilgrim always a Pilgrim; and the gown and scrip and sandalled shoon covered a multitude of sins.

Yes: the Sultan Greyfaunt had found his proper groove in life, and became it admirably. The groove was anointed with the most delicately scented unguent: pommade divine, at least. It was a groove beginning very high up indeed in the social scale, and you slid down it, as down that famous One Tree Hill of antiquity: Avernus.

After a time, Edgar left Pomeroy's Hotel. He did not complain of the costliness of its accommodation—(I think a mutton-chop costs a guinea there, and a bottle of soda-water three-and-sixpence, and I know a one-horse brougham is two pounds ten an hour); but, intending to reside permanently in London, it was, of course, idle to remain in an hotel. So Mr. Constant, whom the sultan deigned to patronise in the most benignant manner, found for his illustrious guest a handsome suite of chambers in St. James's-place; supplied him with a perfect pearl of a washerwoman, who enamelled shirts, iced white waistcoats, frosted pocket-handkerchiefs, and turned cravats into snow-flakes in the most beautiful manner; and, in addition, recommended him a body-servant—a very jewel of a body-servant—a young man by the name of Hummelhausen, said to be a distant relation of the proprietor of Pomeroy's, who shaved, dressed hair, varnished boots, compounded curious restoratives on the mornings after heavy dinners, found out the addresses of people whom he had seen but once in his life, and then only on the Serpentine's banks, played on the guitar, and was worth his weight in gold generally.

Could there be a more fortunate youth than the Sultan Greyfaunt, with his health, his figure, his genius, his ready money, his pearl of a laundress, his jewel of a body-servant, and his coronet upon his card? His name was down at the P. He often dined there. His election was considered certain, owing to the influence of Sir Timotheus O'Boy, that great collector of musical instruments, who is said to have nine of Father Schmidt's organs down at his place in Devonshire, and the original anvil beaten by the Harmonious Blacksmith in his smoking-room in Curzon-street. Some of the best houses in London were open to Edgar. Some of the prettiest faces in London smiled at him from carriage windows. "Oh king! live for ever!" cries the Eastern adulator. The Sultan Greyfaunt would have been but very slightly

incensed with any adulatory person, Oriental or otherwise, who informed him that he, the sultan, was destined to live for ever.

A LOBSTER SALAD.

The man who is curious in crabs and lobsters should raise the ghost of Doctor Philip Sachs, member of the Silesian Society of the Curious in Nature. Such a supper of lobsters and crabs as he gave his readers in a book that he wrote just two centuries ago—it was published at Wratislaw two hundred years ago plus one—and such pictures as he had engraved for it, in which one of the wonders is a reversal of the ordinary course of things into a lobster eating a man, instead of a man eating a lobster—such a book and such pictures ought to have made his name immortal; but they did not. Philip Sachs and his Society of Curious Men were a body of intelligent practitioners of medicine, doing in their own way, without patronage, what our Royal Society had then begun to do in London, for independent experimental research into nature, such as the Baconian philosophy had counselled. We live, nevertheless, in a day that knows not Philip Sachs, and makes a joke of such curious science as his was; although it did represent the first energy of departure from traditional faith in the ancients. Here is a book, indeed, to fall now into the hands of men who never heard of "Gammarology," and hardly know that kammaros is Greek, and cammarus or gammarus, which ever it pleases them to say, is Latin for crab and lobster! Doctor Sachs, nevertheless, was well loved and deservedly honoured in his own day by his own comrades, who would have liked, they said, to put themselves into personal communication with the new English Royal Society, if they had not been hard-working practitioners who cultivated science in the intervals of professional work, and had neither time nor influential help to speed their good will. A tremendous chorus of song from his learned friends in Germany brings Dr. Sachs's Gammarologia Curiosa, with votive verses of applause, into the reader's presence.

This pleasant experimental philosopher cites a series of fables that passed for truths, gives the authority for them, and adds with his own assent the authority of practical research against them. Such were the notions that the salamander will not burn in fire, that the hunted beaver gnawed off the part for which it was then pursued, that a bear licks her cubs into shape, that lightning cannot strike the laurel, that the lion trembles with fear at the crowing of a cock. A prince of Bavaria turned a lion into a farmyard where several cocks crowed lustily, but the lion chased and ate both cocks and hens. Other old errors of this sort are the belief that the viper kills its mother; that a serpent's body can be burst by singing to it; that the bird Manucodiata had no feet, and was, therefore, always flying; that goat's blood would dissolve adamant; that the chameleon lived on air; and the story of the phœnix. But for the song of swans, Dr. Sachs found satisfactory authority, including the report of the Norwegian Olaus Wormius, confirmed upon oath, that by the seashore he had often heard a strange and most sweet murmur of whistling mixed with delightful sounds from flocks of swans; and Paulus Melissus, who was himself called the Swan of Poets (he lived, we may add, in Shakespeare's time), heard a swan singing on the Thames near London.

Now for the experimental science of crabs as it stood with this lively and liberal naturalist two hundred years ago. Animals, he said, are perfect or imperfect. The perfect have blood; the imperfect have, instead of blood, another fluid. The bloodless animals are sub-divided into insects, with distinct incisions in their bodies; the soft skinned; the crustaceous, protected with a slight crust; and the testacean, which are covered with a hard testa or shell. Dr. Sachs's book, which recognises the whole crab tribe, is, in fact, an old natural history treatise upon the still recognised class of crustaceans. And were they not worthy of a treatise? Did not Dorian say that crabs found a man in employment, and delight, and speculation. And, as said Scaliger, you find them everywhere, in sweet and in salt water, on earth, enjoying the air, and for us made enjoyable by help of fire. Roman emperors are said to have fished with nets of gold and silken cord dyed crimson and purple. I, said the doctor, prefer my quiet and cheap hunt after different sorts of crabs, and my study of their characters and habits. I don't write my tale as Oppian did his verses, in letters of gold, and I shall not get gold for my labour, as that Oppian did; there is no Septimus Severus to give me two thousand gold pieces for two thousand lines. Then he gravely, but with a twinkle, doubtless, in his eye as he wrote, stated in his treatise that by the command of his Society of Curiosi he wrote of crabs after writing of wine in his Ampelographia, because crab is not wholesome unless taken with wine, and that it is good to add crab to wine is shown by Dioscorides, who tells us that river crabs cooked with the tendrils of the white vine are good against the bite of a mad dog. How pleasant and perennial is the genial naturalist spirit. Good humour, if not gold, seems to have been in all times one of the very constant rewards of a direct out-of-door study of God's handiwork.

The doctor describes the genera of crustacea, ending with an argument for the existence of underground rivers in which swim fossil (but not petrified) fishes, which, as some of the ancients found, were of unpleasant taste; occasionally even hurtful. There were even believed to be fishes living underground without water, and these notions of fossil life were applied to the study of petrifactions. If other fishes, why not crabs? which in ordinary circumstances are amphibious, and can find food within the earth, in the great cellar of the universe, or living in caves underground near marshy places, at the call of hunger rise out of

the ground all in their armour like the soldiers of Cadmus.

It had been taught that there was a great subterranean flood into which, under Mount Caucasus, subterraneous rivers poured, and that through underground channels this flood sent water to the mountain-tops, whence it came forth in springs, and with the water some of its crabs. Thus all the crabs of the upper world were, some said, fresh water, until they became accustomed to the sea. But of this, says Dr. Sachs, every man is free to think as he pleases.

Nor were those wonderful crabs and shell-fish hard as marble clearly dead. Sperling had defended Martin Kerger's opinion that stones might be alive and have some power of reproduction. Borellus had found a stone sea-urchin full of little ones of the same sort; and several authorities have reported finding adamants with young. Dr. Sachs holds it unquestionable that stones are found with young, but that they ever give birth to their young is for him hard to believe. Living frogs, toads, and crabs had been found in stone, and Grembs had observed that the vital power and longevity of a toad was such that it would not petrify in petrifying waters.

Wonderful things have been found in stone; as, for example, the agate of King Pyrrhus, which showed in colour the Nine Muses dancing with Apollo. In a church at Venice there was a perfect picture of a skull in jaspar, and Our Lord on the Cross, shown in veins of marble so distinctly that the wounds and blood-drops could be exactly discerned. Gaffarell said he had seen in Western Tartary men, camels, and cattle all of stone, which Ortelius thought to be living men and cattle suddenly petrified by a stupendous metamorphosis. A petrified horde, with arms and chariots all turned into stone, was said to cover a considerable region by the marsh Kitaya, between Russia and Tartary; and Cornelius Wietflietius said that in the mountains of a certain province (called Chilensis, perhaps that of the Cileni, of Tarragona in Spain), when the south wind blows, it stiffens whole troops of horsemen suddenly as into statues of stone, and they remain in the road just as they stood before the transformation. Thus it would appear that wind as well as water can have petrifying power, and there were many testimonies to the existence of a whole city that had been so petrified. The same thing, adds the doctor, happened in our time, in the year sixteen 'thirty-four, on a part of the African shore of the Mediterranean, where the whole district was petrified, men, animals, trees, household furniture, grain, and food, being all turned into stone. The event was attended with great crashings in the air and frequent earthquakes.

With all this power of turning real life into stone, it seemed hardly worth while to credit Nature, as she was credited two centuries ago, with sportive imitation of men's teeth and hands, or with the modelling of a whole torso out of marble. Dr. Sachs gives in his book a picture of a stone hand sent to him by Count Hatzfeldt for his own museum. The figure looks very much like three fingers and part of a hand of a man dead of the gout, with unlimited chalk-stone. These sports of nature, as they were considered, were said to be designed to show that all things are contained in all, and that all things seek ultimate perfection in the figure of man, who is made after the divine image. Even the sun, moon, and stars are imaged in selenite.

Very curious, too, was the old argument on the varieties of petrifying water: Dr. Sachs, perhaps because his own name petrified in the breath of Latin as Saxum a stone, giving us a great deal more upon this favourite topic than the crusty skin of his crabs and the discovery also of petrified crabs quite warranted. Only he takes leave to observe concerning petrified crabs found in the rock on the tops of mountains, that some call them sports of nature, some say they were petrified by the rising of subterranean waters. But as crabs are only found in rock-producing places, because elsewhere they could not get material for the crust of their shells, it is no great wonder that they should, in some such places, be found converted altogether into rock. Whence he presently digresses into a discussion of the recent wonder of a stag killed by the huntsmen of Count John Philip, of Hanover, on the twenty-fifth of October, sixteen hundred and sixty-one, at his seat of Bobenhausen, in the stomach of which stag was found a stone serpent. Upon that wonder, the learned and noble F. J. Burrhus had reported that stags had long repute for swallowing snakes as a means of longevity; that mystics also knew the little diadem before a snake's head to be produced gradually in long time by the digestion of terrestrial vapours, and that this diadem, cooked by a gentle heat with certain herbs, had power to petrify the herbs. It was this part of the snake, then, which by digestion in the warm stomach of the stag, with the herbs on which the stag had pastured, petrified the serpent's body into a theriacal stone, of which, said the learned Burrhus, a small portion duly blended with assisting drugs would give new life and strength to the aged; and the dose of the stone of this serpent might rise to as much as five-and-twenty grains.

Upon all which, says Dr. Sachs, and as to the amount of trust to be put in it, judgment is free. The practical reserve that he blends with much unavoidable trust in the science of his time, the taste, not extinct yet, and never to be extinct, for curious and surprising speculation, and the constant desire for clear and direct testimony and experiment, make the book of this Silesian physician a very good representative of the science of Europe at its great turning-point. That point was reached when Bacon had represented in England clearly and strongly the practical end to be kept in view, and the right method of study by observation and experiment, avoiding blind reliance on traditional opinions.

Doctor Sachs, however, is a learned gossip, too full of curious reading to keep any inge-

nious speculation within five miles of his subject from being drawn into it. His next chapter is upon the plants found growing upon crabs'-shell. This suggests curious questions of the relation between plants and minerals, with mention of several authorities who vouch for trees near the gold-mines of Monomatapa, which, by sucking up the metal, produce golden branches; and there were said also to be vines in the whole tract of the river Maine producing golden leaves for the same reason. Again, Joachim Becher had testified in his Metallurgy, that he had seen in Hungary a vine planted over a vein of gold, which vine not only had its stem twisted with gold threads, but yielded, moreover, granules of fine gold in some of the grape pips. Conrad Rubeaquensis had recorded the case of a spike of barley growing out of a woman's nose. Doctor Sachs cites authority for the germination of a cherry-stone within the ear. Nearer to the case of the crabs is that of the great whales, whose backs were said to be sometimes covered, on the part commonly above water, with so much vegetation that they have been mistaken for islands.

But now, at last, the learned doctor gets to his tailed river crabs, which are more properly lobsters, and starts with a chapter on the different uses, poetical, botanical, surgical, and pathological, of the crab's name. There is a dangerous tumour, for example, named crab (cancer), because the swollen veins around it look like a crab's legs; it is also hard like a crab, and, like a lobster (for the word cancer included all the family), it holds tight where it has fixed its claw, and Paracelsus saw another analogy in the fact that the tumour is red like a boiled lobster.

Then follows the picture and description of the common Silesian river crab, or fresh-water lobster, not instantly distinguishable from a sea lobster; and this is the gammarus upon which the doctor mainly founds his Curious Gammarology.

The description is not quite so matter of fact as the scientific description of an animal now-a-days is. For example, two centuries ago it had to be told of the lobster's or crab's eyes, how Kircher held that their light was concreated with them, that they were at once eyes and candles, so that the creatures saw with their own lanterns. Various analogous wonders of this sort are cited, including the fact that the glow-worm voids light enough by his bowels to enable him to find his way of nights.

When he comes to the claws, the doctor tells a case, reported by Schenk, of a man who had lobster's claws instead of fingers; from this the wonderful store of his reading tempts him only to a very short trot round the subject of marks made upon children by the imagination of their mothers; but when he comes to what has been said of the crab's walking backwards, and quotes the French poet who had sung that the star of France must be under the crab, he has a word for the crab-like progress of the art of medicine since its heroic days, and pours the vials of his wrath over, or washes with the lotion, or anoints with the ointment thereof, the whole multiform race of quacks who had brought so noble an art into discredit.

Many wonderful things are then told of the generation of crabs, and next we come to the use continued long after Dr. Sachs's time of Crabs' Eyes as a medicine. Though called eyes, they were not eyes, but little lumps looking like eyes of other animals, of which two are to be found within the shell at the top of the crab's head at the season when the animal is casting the old shell and forming a new one. This suggests discussion of the occurrence of stone within various animals, and of the disease of the stone in man.

The great question why should a black lobster turn red when it is boiled, is next discussed. That involves the theories of that day as to the cause of colour, the nearest to the truth being Kenelm Digby's opinion that various colours proceed from the various mechanical arrangements of a surface that produce various methods of reflecting light. There is a long incidental list, also, of all named colours. A softening of the surface of the lobster's shell in cooking might, according to Kenelm Digby's theory, so rearrange the particles as to change the refraction. Scarmilion ascribed the change to the withdrawal of water out of the shell by effect of heat. Others said that the change was chemical and due to salt, or to action of the principle of sulphur as a source of colour, and others mixed up a vague sulphur theory with a supposed relation of sulphur to the inborn light or phosphorescence of the crab. When it was found that certain lobsters with very thick shells did not turn red at all, that was ascribed to the impediment offered by the thick shell to the sublimation of the sulphur.

To prove that lobsters and crabs are reasoning animals, it is urged that they are good patriots, for they stick to their homes; the hermit crab gets praise for being an economist; and lobsters and crabs are declared to be good astrologers, because of the attention paid by them to the phases of the moon in regulation of their lives. They are well-armed, strenuous warriors, and fight duels with each other for the ladies of their choice. Hereupon, off rides the doctor for a round of curious talk upon the wars of animals, including cock-fighting, but he gets back to his special subject in description of a fight between a lobster and a cuttle-fish, and of course he is soon in the thick of Homer's fighting crabs in the Batracho myomachia.

There we leave him, although we are only half way through the thick of his book, which has yet to discuss hibernation, deposit of shell, renewal of cast claws (which topic does not fail to suggest to him the renewal of men's noses by the Taliacotian operation), the mutations of crabs in accordance with the phases of the moon, their longevity; their food; how to catch crabs, how to eat them, with dissertation upon ancient luxury as regards fishes; the art of cooking lobsters and crabs as practised in the earliest

and latest times; diatetic selection of them; their disagreements with the stomach; their medicinal use; and, to wind up all, a long nosology, or list of recognised diseases, with special regard to the use or no use that may be found for lobster and crab in each of them.

TWELVE HINTS FOR US.

HINT THE FIRST.

The Russians have a convenient way of sending invitations to dinner, and one which saves a great deal of trouble and unpleasantness. It is also the best and simplest mode of protection yet invented against the carelessness and mistakes of servants. The dinner giver keeps a stoutly-bound book, with a pocket on one or both sides for the notes of invitation. In this book the names of the guests, and the date upon which the invitation is sent, are written down, together with blank spaces for the signatures of the guests, or their hall-porters or servants, acknowledging receipt of the invitation. Thus:

When Sent.	Name of Guest.	Residence.	When Received.	Signature.
April 1.	Mr. Epicure.	Eaton-square.	April 1.	Received, Jeames Calves, Footman.

Another advantage of this method is, that by a glance at the book the guest may see the names of the other persons with whom he is to dine, so that Mr. St. Bernard may not be unhappily led to a dinner-table where he is certain to meet Miss Grimalkin. This plan, also, does away with all necessity for reply in case of acceptance—a great gain for him who, with a small establishment, does not know how it muddles a household to have buttons, or butler, or Mary Jane running about with three-cornered notes just as they are wanted at home.

HINT THE SECOND.

There are throughout the East large khans or hotels, conducted upon a principle which I have long thought might be imitated with advantage in Europe. Perhaps one such halting-place might be established with advantage in every considerable city. These khans are usually built round the four sides of a spacious well-paved court-yard ornamented with a fountain, and often pleasantly shaded with trees, which enliven and give an effect of singular grace and beauty to the spot. The rooms are entirely unfurnished, and the whole permanent staff of the establishment consists of a porter to open and close the gates, and a few guardians or messengers who live upon what they can get.

Thither merchants and travellers repair, take such rooms as they want by the day, furnishing them as they think proper, living as they please upon their own fare, with or without their own servants, and locking up their rooms and taking their keys with them when they go out. The stables are conducted on the same principle. The traveller pays for space, but finds his own grooms and provender. Many of the rooms are shop-fronted, so that a traveller arriving with merchandise may display his wares to the passer-by, and the agreeable lounge which the place affords makes loungers as numerous as in an English arcade or bazaar. A person with a new invention, anxious to try the public taste, might here find an excellent opportunity of doing so, without being forced, as he now often is, to take a shop in an expensive neighbourhood for a term longer than perhaps he may require it. These hotels appear to me the only temporary resting-places where a traveller may feel himself really at home and live as he likes, without being exposed to the idle curiosity of servants and charges which, however comparatively reasonable they have recently grown, may be such as he is unwilling or unable to afford. A brisk young traveller might here brush his own clothes and boots, make his own tea and coffee, boil his own kettle, cook his own chop, and thus live, perhaps, for about one shilling a day, and yet present a good face and respectable address to the world. A couple of chairs, a bed, a table, a chest of drawers, and a cupboard, hired or bought from a broker, to be re-sold when done with, would be all wanted to make him decently comfortable; and the demand for such things in a neighbourhood would soon create a supply on moderate terms.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the advantages of such an establishment to a large class of persons. Small foreign traders, for instance, without connexions in England, and desirous of introducing some new article of trade to our markets. Inventors anxious to exhibit some new discovery, and try the public taste for it. Emigrants hampered with much luggage, and wishing to look about them and supply their remaining wants before starting on their long voyage. Needy officers in the army, navy, and civil service, going to and returning from their posts. Country horse-dealers bringing their cattle for sale to the metropolis; professional men wishing for an occasional place of residence away from their usual houses, where they might be consulted on fixed days, and unwilling to carry the instruments of their profession about with them. Such as dentists, oculists, and surgeons, of repute in some particular branch of their profession; country solicitors having frequent business and many papers and documents constantly necessary for reference in London; barristers on circuit, desiring more privacy than is to be found at a noisy hotel; public lecturers and entertainers, and all persons obliged to travel with a good deal of luggage, and to whom expense is an object, or privacy a necessity.

Why should there not be club-houses during the summer in the country as well as in towns?

HINT THE THIRD.

Why should not the chief clubs in the principal cities of Europe enter into arrangements by which members of certain clubs should be

members of others in different places, so that the stranger of respectability in a foreign capital may be enabled to carry his passport into society about with him, and not be obliged to worry ambassadors and their secretaries, to whom he may be personally unknown, for introductions which it is often as delicate a matter to give as to refuse?

HINT THE FOURTH.

Of all the expensive things in a modern English house of the ordinary class, perhaps carpets are the dearest; in case of removal they become almost useless, and have to be sacrificed at any price that can be got for them, because having been cut and measured for one room, perhaps of a peculiar shape, they are useless in any other; for if the pattern could be matched, which it often cannot, a bit of bran-new carpet sewn on to a bit not so new, would be out of harmony, and tell a story which the pride of poverty would rather were concealed. The Persian and Turkish system of carpeting rooms is infinitely better, and prettier than ours. The Persian carpets, especially those from Resht, are exquisitely beautiful. Their colours are brighter, the designs prettier, and they are far more durable than European carpets. They are made in strips usually between two and three yards long, and about one yard in breadth, to go round the sides of a room, with a square carpet of any size preferred for the centre. They do not require to be nailed or fitted, and a sufficient number of them will of course carpet any room, however large or small. They have a very rich and grand appearance, too. In summer they are easily taken up, beaten, rolled and put aside by a single man-servant; and in the hot weather why should we not more generally imitate continental custom by painting or polishing our floors? Floors painted or polished look far prettier in July sunshine than any carpets, which are then mere fusty traps to catch dust, harbour insects, and retain bad smells. Everything has its use and its seasons. The use and the season of carpets are not in the summer-time. Where it is impossible to paint or to polish the floors of a house, the employment of oil-cloth will be found good economy in summer, and far cleaner. Oil-cloth, too, of charming patterns, may now be bought very cheaply, and it keeps a room delightfully cool and fresh.

HINT THE FIFTH.

Let us go back from Persia to Russia. Nothing strikes a modern traveller so strongly as the fact that Europe, and even the whole world, is gradually becoming one great society very closely knit together. I have met people in the heart of Central Asia perfectly aware of all the recent gossip and scandal which, a generation ago, would hardly have been known beyond the best-informed society of London and Paris. The intercourse between nations becomes daily closer and more complicated.

I remember a few years ago conversing with an eminent London solicitor on the prospects of a war between England and France. "The world," said he, "has never yet seen a misfortune which would be so widely felt. I have clients who are married to French men and French women. I have clients who hold French funds, securities, houses, lands. French contracts, wills, interests of all sorts and kinds are mixed up with ours—a war between us would be a dreadful thing."

All professional celebrities now speedily acquire a world-wide repute. The author, the man of science, the artist, the statesman, now appeal to the whole world, and everything and everybody worth knowing is known to all. Never perhaps in the history of mankind was the knowledge of foreign countries, their laws, customs, and language, so widely necessary. Never did travel form so essential a part of liberal education.

But travel, to be really useful, must begin early in life, and at a time when young men cannot be always trusted alone, while it is only the very rich who can afford the expense of travelling tutors. The Russian government has perceived this, and, I am informed, has recently appointed to Paris and Rome a functionary of remarkable utility. His employment is that of director of the studies of such young Russians as are sent to the schools and colleges of France for the completion of their education. He is there to give them advice and counsel in case of need; to see, as far as possible, that they do not get into scrapes; and to communicate with their parents and guardians, who may also refer to him whenever needful. Allowances may be paid through him; college fees and proper expenses learnt correctly and paid; youths recalled home, or placed, when wild, under proper care and superintendence. Might we not employ such functionaries with advantage in all the great capitals of Europe, and such university towns as Bonn and Heidelberg, which are frequented by young Englishmen? Or might not a special attaché with such duties be added to our embassies and large consulates? Students being required to present themselves to him when desired to do so by their parents or guardians; and he making regular half-yearly reports respecting their progress, in the style of our own public schoolmasters, that their friends might know if their time were well employed. Many a parent might be saved a sore heart by such means, many a wild young lad—now wasting his time on billiards, and wrecking his health with fiery drinks or worse—might thus be trained and fostered into an honest and useful man.

HINT THE SIXTH.

Russia gives us as good a hint for the management of our feet as for the management of our heads, and very serviceable things much used there and little known in England, are double boots, coming up just above the ankle and outside the trousers. Being made easy, they enable a person who has walked through muddy streets to enter a house with perfectly clean feet and trousers, so that he neither soils

marble staircase nor velvet carpets. They are provided with a little brass screw behind, which looks like a spur, but serves in reality to take them off by merely pressing the foot upon it. The old Hessian boot may be so made also as to serve a similar purpose very gracefully.

HINT THE SEVENTH.

We are apt to consider our English things better than other things, but it is a great question with me whether the Arab horse-shoe is not better than ours. It is a thin plate of iron covering the whole hoof; it is far lighter and gives more protection, though it requires to be removed oftener. The snaffle bridle, in many parts of the East and Germany, is rapidly superseding the cruel old curb. It is quite wonderful what may be done with it in skilful hands. Thus much is certain, that though by our mode of handling horses we make the best hunters and race-horses in the world, we certainly do not make such light going and pleasant hacks as the Arab and German horsemen.

Another foreign custom connected with horses we should do well to imitate, is the use of the saddle-cloth; for the want of which many a fine horse has been ruined, and become afflicted with a sore or otherwise diseased back—a not unfrequent cause of string-halt, by the way. In Persia they have very pretty saddle-cloths, sometimes merely blue, edged with gold, and sometimes beautiful patchwork of many colours. Not only do these saddle-cloths prevent the horse getting chilled when the saddle is suddenly removed, but they keep the rider's coat from being spoiled by foam and sweat. Another custom the Persians have too, is covering the saddle with black lambswool, which not only improves its appearance, but gives a much firmer seat.

Our practice of cutting horses' tails—not wholly abandoned—is a very graceless and cruel one. It is curious that what we call the racer tail is used by Eastern couriers for putting a mark on bad horses which are to be carefully avoided by their comrades on arriving at a post-house.

HINT THE EIGHTH.

If we turn from motion to repose, we may still get a hint from abroad. Who has not suffered from the inconvenience of a badly-made bed, where the sheet rucks up, or comes off, and leaves one exposed in the middle of the night to the rasping of a blanket? A much better manner of making beds than ours is that common in the East, where the sheets are lightly tacked on to the mattress below and the quilted silk coverlid above. All that linen is saved now wasted in the tucking up, and the movements of the sleeper are free instead of being swathed and bound down as under our system. Space might be also usefully economised in a house, or a stray guest comfortably accommodated by doing away in many cases with bedsteads, and employing an air mattress simply laid upon the floor. It might be easily emptied, and stowed away in a small cupboard during the day, and one quilted silk or cotton coverlid to lie upon, and another sufficiently wadded to cover the sleeper, both with sheets loosely tacked to them, are all the clothes required for the chilliest. In Russia, it is a common practice to have such bed-clothes stowed away in deep boxes made for them under sofas. If bedsteads, from habit or caprice, are absolutely required, the Eastern divan makes a capital sleeping-place during the night, and a handsome sofa in the daytime. Beneath it may be a deep drawer or box for a pillow and bed-clothes. Few rooms in the East are given over entirely to sleeping. The best pillow I ever used is one covered with chamois leather. Paper pillows are also good.

HINT THE NINTH.

The readiest means of destroying bad smells, and one always at hand, is to pour a little vinegar, drop by drop, upon a red hot poker or a heated shovel. A good thing, too, is to keep some powdered charcoal somewhere about a room; it is easy to put it in a pretty vessel.

HINT THE TENTH.

There is a capital summer drink in Russia called "kislisjee," a light frothy sparkling kind of beer, which does not get into the head. It is exquisitely grateful to the palate when iced, and may be made at home for about one halfpenny a quart.

An excellent cold soup for summer use, a delicacy almost unknown in England, may be made from the liquor in which fish has been boiled, with chopped onions and grated horse-radish, a little lemon-peel, mint, thyme, and fried parsley. A slice of cold salmon and a little cucumber will improve it vastly. It is the famous Russian "batvinia," only abused by those who have never eaten it at good tables.

HINT THE ELEVENTH.

The best tea-urn known is the Russian semovar; but it must be prepared in the open air before it is brought to table. The very best way to extract the finest flavour from tea is to put a couple of teaspoonfuls in a little silver strainer, hold it over the teacup, and pour boiling water gently through it, without the use of teapot at all. The same tea cannot be used for two cups without losing in flavour. Milk and cream are thought to injure the taste of the finest sorts of tea, a few drops of orange or lemon-juice to improve it. The costliest of the teas used in Russia is a yellow tea, called the "flower of spring;" its price is as high as five pounds sterling for the pound weight, and the Russian pound is less than ours.

HINT THE TWELFTH.

Among the things to be learned from foreigners is one idea peculiarly healthful and genial. It is a charity of the very noblest kind, for it is one which elevates instead of debasing its objects, and teaches the fine lesson of self-reliance instead of the miserable and heart-breaking one of dependence.

An amiable friend of mine has recently

founded an institution of singular utility, and entirely self-supporting. She has taken a shop situated in a popular thoroughfare, but having a private entrance from the back. At this shop any distressed persons may leave any article they possess for sale, from a piano to a pair of worked slippers. The article is there received and properly taken care of, a receipt in due form given to the owner, and the price asked recorded in a register. Small advances are made, without interest, on security of the deposit, and when it is sold a very small commission is charged upon the sale, just sufficient to cover expenses, and no more. No questions are asked, and nothing required save satisfactory proof that the article deposited has been properly come by, which is usually supplied by a few lines of recommendation from some person of known respectability. Thus many persons are enabled to obtain an honest price for the goods which poverty obliges them to sell, and decent pride is spared many a humiliation of the pawn-shop, and saved from the sharp practice of the dishonest broker.

FOX, SHACKLE, AND LEGGIT.

"If you please, Mr. Mortimer, sir," said the call-boy of the Royal Whitby Theatre, "will you come down to the stage for a moment before you finish dressing? Mr. Vallancey wants to speak a few words to the whole company, and they're all a waiting, sir, for you."

I was washing off the "war paint" after performing the onerous parts of Zanga, the Speaking Harlequin, and Marmaduke Magog.

I was rather tired and rather crossed, so I replied somewhat testily, "Oh, bother! let Mr. Vallancey wait, he makes other people wait."

Three minutes afterwards, Miss Miranda Brudenel, the manager's youngest daughter, still attired as a peasant girl of the village in which I had been beadle, knocked at the door and said, in a wheedling voice, "If you please, Mr. Mortimer, will you oblige pa by coming down for a moment as you are; for, if you please, he has something very important to announce to the company."

"Possibly an increase of salary," I thought; and, with one cheek a damask red, and one cheek quite white, I flew down stairs.

The houses had been fearfully bad. The seaboard of Yorkshire is not appreciative of the Thespian art. We had all been on half salaries for the last three weeks, and it was rumoured that the manager hadn't money enough to pay even for the cart to remove his properties to York.

Imagine, therefore, the anxiety that sat, not only on my piebald face, but on the faces of Bodgers, our first tragedian; and Mrs. Wilson, our queen, heroine, and solo singer. As for the utility man, the chambermaid, and my fellow comedian, they looked hungry, angry, and feverishly excited. Davis, the money-taker, treasurer, and prompter, alone was imperturbable.

The footlights had not been put out. Vallancey stood dark against them, facing his expectant auditory. He bowed to me with considerable dignity when I ran on the stage, and thanked me for my extreme courtesy and promptitude.

"The governor's very full of blarney to-night," whispered my fellow comedian. "I wonder what's up; no good, I'll be bound."

"Ladies and gentlemen of the Theatre Royal Whitby," commenced Mr. Vallancey, "it is not in mortals to command success. We have fretted a good many hours upon this stage. We have lavished our intellectual resources on this, may I say, chaotic region of the far north. We have turned the full rays of Shakespeare's great solar lantern, to use a somewhat fanciful metaphor, upon this benighted region; but, alas! we have elicited a few tears, but very little money."

"Doosed little pewter, shiver me," groaned Bodgers, in a hoarse whisper.

"I will trouble the honourable gentleman on my right not at present to interrupt me. I shall not fail to touch, very soon, on financial matters. The coruscations of wit, the glitter of fancy, the luminous diction of Otway, the broad humour of Foote, the sensibility of Lee, the ingenuity of Sheridan, have alike failed to draw houses at all equal to our anticipations. The robust dignity of my friend Mr. Bodgers, the pathos and tenderness of Mrs. Wilson, the versatility and quaintness of Mr. Mortimer, the acute, practical, and commercial mind of Mr. Davis, and the industry, care, and talent of the other gentlemen and ladies I see around me, have been cast upon a barren and rocky soil. What, gentlemen and ladies, has been the result? The same result, I must answer, that attends famine in the human subject, a want of blood, by which I figuratively allude to money; a want of vitality, by which I would hint at pecuniary debility; a want of tone, by which I would delicately allude to our want of credit among the sordid and degraded tradespeople of this town. I stand before you beaten down, but not ashamed; defeated, but not hopeless. A day will come, ladies and gentlemen, when we shall all date our great successes from the lessons taught us in these hours of adversity. It has, however, become necessary for me to leave this infamous den of ignorance and sail-cloth makers, avarice and rope-twisters, and, moreover, to leave secretly this very night. Mr. Davis, my right hand, will therefore now proceed to pay you each your half salaries for the past week, ranging from ten shillings downward, and I now beg to thank you all for your zealous and talented services, to wish you God-speed in that brilliant career open to many of you, and beg you, in a moment of success, to speak with kindness and forbearance of that unfortunate manager who now wishes you very regretfully, farewell."

Bodgers was angry; one or two of us hissed; Mrs. Wilson sat down and cried; I threatened violence, and hinted at the County Court; but Mr. Vallancey was equal to the occasion.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "the receipts of to-night are already removed from this theatre. To prevent any indecorous

violence being shown by any misguided members of this company, from which I now part with so much regret, I have ordered a policeman to wait at the outer door. No, ladies and gentlemen, do not let us degrade our sacred profession in the eyes of a derisive seafaring population."

We received our miserable gains with sour and mutinous faces. Bodgers swore worse than the army in Flanders, or any other country. As for myself, I was ready to sit down and cry, and think of my wife and three children, whom I had left in ancestral Pentonville buoyed up by the most extravagant hopes.

Mr. Vallancey left the stage for a moment. He returned with his hat on, and his umbrella under his arm; he held in one hand a pair of dusty trodden-down dancing pumps, thin as cheese-parings, the ribbon bows blue with mould. He advanced to Bodgers, and said in a solemn husky voice,

"My dear friend, accept these shoes; they were once worn by that immortal actor, George Frederick Cooke, in whose footsteps you are already treading. Take them, and be happy."

I was quite ashamed of Bodgers. He disdained all appearance of gratitude, and flung the immortal shoes of George Frederick Cooke far into the pit.

"I want no remembrance," he shouted, in his gross way, "of either you or any other blackguard who doesn't pay the people he employs. I shan't forget you, in a hurry, Jack Vallancey; nor, I dare say, will any one here."

Our company had broken up like an iceberg in summer. The theatre had been secretly sold by Mr. Vallancey, who, the night of his farewell speech, left for London with his wife and two daughters. Two days from that time I was the only member of the corps dramatique left in Whitby. I subsisted for a week by reciting and ventriloquising at a harmonic meeting.

One night, as I was leaving the house, a friend of mine, named Hanson, a lawyer's clerk, said to me:

"If you can write a good hand, Mortimer, and would accept it, I could get you a place as copying clerk at a lawyer's office in London. I've a cousin there. He writes to me to come up directly, as there is a vacancy at his governor's; but I can't go. I have got accustomed to Whitby, I like it, and I mean to settle here. Will you go?"

I stammered my thanks, but hinted that I had not quite money enough to carry me up.

"O, that shan't stop you," said the good little fellow. "We've been good friends; I know you'll get on, if not in one way, in another; so I'll lend you enough to take you up to town. Stay, I'll go directly and write a letter to Sam Thelluson, and he'll make it all square. Return the money, old fellow, when it is convenient. Oh, you'll do. I see it in your eye. Time and the tide wear out the roughest day.—Shakespeare, eh?"

I obtained the situation at Messrs. Fox, Shackle, and Leggit's, No. 103B, Ely-place, Holborn, thanks, partly to my own impudence, but still more to the eulogies heaped on me by Gussy Hanson, who spoke of me as the wonder of the Whitby legal world, his proof of my talent being entirely drawn from his brilliant imagination. I had, however, been once a year in a lawyer's office at Canterbury, from which I had run away to join a troop of strolling players. I found Mr. Samuel Thelluson an excellent fellow, rather idle, but sharp, full of fun, and an intense admirer of the dramatic profession. He was about eight-and-thirty, rather short, with a face covered with hair up to his very eyes, a long red nose, and a cunning droll pinched-up face. A man, in short, whom no counsel could browbeat and no witness humbug.

The head clerk, old Hill, was a little shrunken, grey-haired man, very neat and precise in his old-fashioned dress, a fanatic at business, punctual, severe, with no thought but of business—a sort of man who, if he had had a day's holiday, would have taken home a book on Gavelkind to annotate. He always wore a frilled shirt, drab gaiters, and wide-brimmed hat. We got on very well together, although he considered me a great deal too fond of practical joking and theatricals.

The second clerk, Blakeney, Thelluson's terror, took a dislike to me the moment he saw me. He was a stout, white-faced, insolent-looking fellow, who always dressed in black, and dashed about from chambers to chambers with feverish pomposity. He was the right hand of Mr. Shackle, into whose favour he had wormed himself, and was very jealous of Thelluson, whose smallest peccadillo he delighted to expose to the firm.

The partners are easily described. Mr. Fox was a tall, thin man, cold, hard, stiff, silent, and proud. Mr. Shackle was a jolly, lively, bustling lawyer, always in court or running about with papers under his arm; while Mr. Leggit, the capitalist, was a mysterious, over-dressed man, who hardly ever came near the place but once a week or so, and then drove up to the door in a handsome barouche full of ladies, on his way to some horticultural fête. I believe he was the son of the rich founder of the firm, who had retired, and that Fox and Shackle had formerly been only clerks. He was chairman of several companies, and lived in great style somewhere down near Dorking.

A good deal of this I gathered from Sam Thelluson the first day of my engagement, as he walked with me to my own door at Pentonville. I felt rather nervous, for I dreaded the reproaches of Bessy, and I dreaded still more her disappointment when she found all my ambition gone, and the budding Kemble reduced to a mere lawyer's clerk. But she bore it very well. She cried for joy to see me, so did the children, and she told me (though, perhaps, she put all this on) that though her hopes of my success had been great, she really was glad, after all, that I had got into a steady, quiet way of life, where the salary, though low, was certain—at all events, now we could see more of

each other, and that was a comfort; and so she cheered me up, and almost made me think I had taken the wisest step in my whole life, except that of marrying her.

"That fellow Blakeney hates you like sin," said Thelluson, whispering over his desk to me the second week of my engagement; "he's been telling old Hill this morning that he thinks you have been an actor, your spirits are so very high, and he said this while Fox was passing through the office, on purpose to let the old boy hear. O, he's a snake in the grass. Will you come to-night to a harmonic meeting at the Lord Rodney? They want you to take the chair and give them a patter song."

"Not so much talking, gentlemen, if you please," said old Hill, looking up over his spectacles. "There really must not be so much talking; it so confuses me I can't distinguish the plaintiff from the defendant in the brief I am preparing, in the important case of Grinder versus Filer, and it has to go to counsel to-night?"

An hour later old Hill was called out, and Thelluson went with him. I was writing very hard, when in burst Thelluson, and began waltzing round the room with an office stool.

"Hurrah! Mortimer," he said, "I left old Hill and Blakeney fast at Westminster, waiting for a cause that can't come on for two hours. Come and give us that bit of Zanga."

"What bit?" said I, coquettishly.

"O, you know; that bit about 'souls made of fire, and children of the sun.' Give it us in the reg'lar Doory Lane manner."

"But I've got this deed to finish."

"Hang the deed. Let it wait; can't always be slaving."

"Very well, then," said I, "if you will have it; but let's go further back. You swoon. You're Alonzo. Give me that ruler. Now, then, swoon."

Thelluson swooned, with one eye carefully open.

I began that wonderful piece of rant:

> Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep,
> Let Afric and her hundred thrones rejoice;
> O, my dear countrymen, look down and see
> How I bestride your prostrate conqueror—
> I tread on haughty Spain!

To my horror, at that moment the door opened, and in walked Mr. Fox, cold, precise, and trim as ever, followed by Mr. Blakeney, malignant, and smiling at the haste and confusion with which I and Sam vaulted upon our stools, and recommenced our writing.

At that moment there came a whistle down the speaking-pipe, and then a bellow of that beast Blakeney's voice:

"Mr. Fox wants to speak to Mr. Mortimer for a moment."

"Now we're in for it," said Sam. "It's all that Blakeney, I know it is! Brazen it out."

I ran up, trembling. There sat Mr. Fox, cold as ice; repulsive as Rhadamanthus. His coat was firmly buttoned up to the throat, he played with a gold pen that he balanced on the edge of a large pewter inkstand on one side of him, and Blakeney stood resting his hand on his chair, feverish with malice.

A large playbill lay on the desk before Mr. Fox. It was a Whitby bill, obtained by some infernal malice of Blakeney's, and bore my name in large letters as the celebrated impersonator of the Speaking Harlequin.

"Mr. Mortimer," said the man of ice, "from certain information that I have received, I am inclined to think that you have insinuated yourself into this office under a feigned character. Is this your name?"

"It is, sir."

Blakeney sputtered with pleasure.

"Are you the Mr. Mortimer alluded to in this bill?"

"No," said I, boldly—(how could I tell the truth, when I thought of my poor wife and children?)—"a cousin of mine—I believe, on the stage somewhere. Common name in Yorkshire. Know nothing of him."

Blakeney bit his lips till the blood nearly came.

"That will do, Mr. Mortimer," said the lawyer, coldly; "you can go down. But, remember, no more scenes such as those I have just had the pain of witnessing! Remember!"

"We must really have no more skylarking!" cried Blakeney, deprecatingly.

I and old Hill began to fraternise soon after this. When business was over he liked to hear me talk, and even forgave me one day when I flung the pounce-pad at Thelluson, and it accidentally skimmed his silver spectacles off.

But Fate seemed to have sworn to torment me. One day when Blakeney was giving me directions about a deed that he wanted copied, the door opened, and who should come in but old Vallancey, stouter than ever, rosy, and extravagantly dressed. The man was a humbug, and yet I always liked him to a certain degree, and the sight of him recalled old times.

"Why, Mortimer," he said, "my soul's delight, companion of my fame, how is't with thee? And beshrew me, but it glads my heart to see thee!"

I gave him such a look, and replied, as coldly as I could, "that I little expected to see you; so you are come about that farm in Norfolk; as you say the title is imperfect."

Vallancey was unmistakably an actor: his large clean-shaven face, the way he wore his hat, his gestures, were all those of the actor. He took my hint.

"I have come," he said, "to refresh your managing clerk. I come to tell you that I am still hesitating, my dear friend, about the Norfolk business, but that if anything turns up—turns up, my dear boy—the affair shall be submitted to your very well-known firm. At the same time, can you spare me five minutes now on private business?"

I said I thought I could.

Vallancey waved me out with a hand covered with Bristol diamonds.

When we got into Holborn, Mr. Vallancey, still the same specious plausible man as ever, clapped me on the back, and expressed his unlimited delight at seeing me.

"My dear boy," he said, "I left you a votary of Melpomene, I find you a slave of Themis, but rejoice, exult, my son, Fortune has turned the wheel. I am now part owner of the Royal Finsbury Theatre, which will open with unprecedented attraction three weeks hence. We want you—you, Mortimer—once more to delight the world, once more to cast your coruscations of fancy upon the great suburb of a mighty imperial city—yes, sir, a city not inferior to Rome, and surpassing in riches Babylon, the mother of nations. Come, my son, home to the old congenial motley profession, and gladden the heart of Montague Vallancey, manager."

I yielded to the manager's blandishments and flattery, and asked if he could oblige me with an instant advance; but Vallancey at once assumed the voice of Hamlet's ghost, and the deprecating attitude of irritated Brutus.

"No," said he—"no, my son, that cannot be done; it can't, indeed. The pale drudge between man and man is wanted for scenery and decorations; but this day three weeks I will pour gold at your feet—yes, sir, gold."

I agreed to wait till then, and resumed my work. Thelluson envied my future fame, and secretly mourned over my intended departure.

In the mean time we plunged into theatricals, and got up an amateur performance at the Lord Rodney. I was to play Zanga, and Thelluson, to his intense delight, was to play the lover in Miss in her Teens to my Billy Fribble, the cowardly fop, a part of which I was particularly proud. At the Royal Whitby Theatre our manager had cultivated the old school of comedy and farce. Thelluson pleaded very hard for Box and Cox, but to no avail, for my party at the Lord Rodney outvoted him.

The night before I gave notice to the firm, I had planned a full-dress rehearsal at the office, after hours. It was to be at seven. Messrs. Fox, Shackle, and Blakeney always leaving punctually at six. We had got our dresses lent us for two hours, on leaving a deposit at Mr. Abraham Levi's, the owner of those fascinating articles.

We had even let old Hill into our secret, and persuaded him to stay and see our performance. He was not in the least aware that I had ever been a real actor. I anticipated some fun from the surprise of the old fellow, whose reminiscences of the stage had ceased in the time of Edmund Kean.

The night came, and we all duly left the office at the usual hour. A short time after, I and Thelluson stole back with our bundles, lit the gas, and began to dress. I looked very well in my cut-away coat, knee-breeches, cocked-hat, and long white embroidered satin waistcoat. Thelluson would have looked well in an old militia uniform, hat and feathers, and ponderous sword, but unfortunately they were all much too large for him. Just as we were dressed, in came old Hill, smiling, but rather ashamed of having given his consent, entreating us to keep the gas low, and not to make any noise that could be heard by Messrs. Docket and Dolson, next door.

I opened the meeting by moving as a resolution that some Welsh ale be instantly sent for, together with a tin to warm it in, and materials for mulling it. The motion was seconded by Samuel Thelluson, Esq., and carried unanimously; old Hill undertaking not merely to serve as jury and audience, but to mull the ale. One thing only he protested against in the sternest way, and that was pipes; but as for prompting, he would do that if it consisted in nothing more than giving the word when anybody hesitated and forgot his part.

The fire burnt up, the ale bubbled in the tin extinguisher; old Hill beamed on us over his spectacles, and we began now to astonish him.

We took the scene in Miss in her Teens where Fribble recounts to the lady of whom he is enamoured his recent misadventures.

Thelluson, to deceive old Hill, pretended to treat me as a novice.

"Now you'll see," said he, "the more brass a man has, the sooner he breaks down in theatricals. O, it is frightful standing up before two hundred eyes, all glaring at you as if you were in the pillory. By George, sir, it paralyses me. I don't think I shall ever pull through; and doesn't your memory go all of a sudden!"

I began by dashing into my part. I minced my words, I ogled old Hill with an immense plated eye-glass, I walked in an ostentatiously imbecile way on my toes, I kept bowing and making ridiculous faces.

Old Hill laughed till he let the ale boil over.

"Excellent, excellent!" he cried.

I went on, still without speaking. I ogled, I put my hand to my heart, I whisked about my handkerchief, I sighed; at last I began:

"'There was a club of us young fellows, all bachelors, who met every Wednesday to discuss the fashions and cut out patterns for the ladies; it is not generally known that the useful invention of knotting is to be attributed to the joint exertions of our little community.'"

"Why, he does not seem to want prompting. The ale's ready, gentlemen," said old Hill.

But my first success was quite outshone, when we had each had a glass of mulled ale, by the laurels I gathered when I went on to dilate on my misfortunes:

"'Do you know, Miss Biddy, that t'other day, coming out of the club, says one of those hackney-coach fellows to me, "Does your honour want a coach?" "No," says I, with all the civility imaginable. With that the insolent dog fell a laughing. "Drat me, man," says I, "but I'll trounce ye." Upon which the vulgar wretch tipped me with the lash of his whip over the nail of the little finger of my left hand, and gave me such exquisite torture that I fainted; and if you'll believe it, Miss Biddy, when I came to myself I found that the mob had picked my pocket of my mocha smelling-bottle and my housewife.'"

Old Hill bore up pretty well when I began sparring in a mincing way at an imaginary "hackney-coach fellow," but when I went on to express the extreme torture of the cut over the nail of my little finger, and then, after an imaginary collapse, proceeded to come to, and felt in my tail-pocket for my smelling-bottle and housewife, he fairly bent double with excessive laughter, and the tears rolled from his eyes.

All of a sudden a blundering noise in Mr. Shackle's office—the next room, which was only separated from us by a door, the upper half of which was cut away and hung with green baize—made us stop in the performance.

Thelluson put down a glass of hot spiced ale he had just raised to his lips, and turned distinctly pale. Old Hill listened, but, the ale having slightly got into his head, was defiant, and void of suspicion. "Go on, go on, Fribble," he said; "it's only the rats. I often hear them when I'm stopping here late."

We did the duel scene. I felt the old intoxication of stage triumphs come over me. I revelled in the part. As for Thelluson, he got through very fairly, but he wanted a good deal of prompting, and old Hill had never got quite the right place.

"I tell you what," whispered Thelluson, "Hill's had nearly enough."

"Let's have some more egg-hot," suggested old Hill; and we agreed, especially as he waved an empty pewter pot, and proposed to pay for everything. "But you've been an actor. Don't tell me," he said, with a smile meant to be intensely shrewd.

"If you say I have, I suppose it's no use denying it," I said.

I took Thelluson into a corner. "Now," said I, "I am going to make old Hill's hair stand on end. I mean to leap through that door, if you'll first get him into conversation while I go in and clear the chairs, and lay down the sofa-cushion to drop on. As I return, I'll whip off the baize curtain, and then I'll say, 'Houp-là!' I have been a professional harlequin, as you know, Sam, so you need not fear a failure."

Our plans succeeded perfectly. Thelluson got old Hill, who had become indistinct and dogmatic, into a confused dispute about harlequins. Old Hill insisted on it that they leaped from spring-boards and were caught on feather-beds. In the mean time I had stolen into the room, arranged everything for my leap, and twisted up the curtain. All at once I interfered angrily in the dispute.

"What do *you* say?" said the old man, turning his vacant eyes on me.

"Say," said I, "that any one can do a harlequin's jump; look here, it's nothing." And I buttoned my coat, put myself together, and began rolling my head in the orthodox way.

"For Heaven's sake!" cried Hill.

"He'll kill himself!" roared Thelluson.

"He's dreadful," sobbed Hill; "stop him!"

I ran, gave a spring up, passed through the door, and alighted headforemost against some soft perpendicular substance, which yielded to me, and fell with me, with a scream, just as a roar of applause came from Thelluson.

"Thieves! thieves!" I shouted. "Help! help!" And I grappled with the substance, that proved to be a man. In rushed Sam and dragged us both out. To our surprise and horror it was Blakeney, gasping for breath. After him strode in Mr. Fox, who was stonier than ever. Old Hill dropped the can of ale over Blakeney, who lay prostrate.

"This is pretty well, gentlemen," said Mr. Fox; "very well indeed. These are nice goings on in a respectable office. Mr. Hill, I am surprised, sir, at your connivance with these scoundrels."

"Sh-coundrel," said Hill, irritated into courage. "Sh-coundrel yourself—spy—no c'nivance—jolly companionsh every one. For he's a jolly good fellow—chorus, for he's——"

"As for you, idle and abandoned reprobates," said Mr. Fox, snapping round on us, "I discharge you both this very evening. Do not let me see you cross my threshold again, and let me publicly thank you, Mr. Blakeney, for the vigilance and sagacity that has at last enabled me to discover the machinations of this low actor and his degraded companion."

"As well go in for a sheep as a lamb. I owe Fox something," said Thelluson, and commenced to square up to Mr. Fox.

But I drew him away. "You only anticipate me, Mr. Fox, by a few hours," I said. "I have already accepted a very remunerative post in a much more honest and pleasant employment."

I never exactly discovered how Blakeney contrived to hear of our private theatricals; but I found afterwards, and was glad to find, that old Hill was so useful to the firm, that, poor old fellow, he had soon gone back to Messrs. Fox, Shackle, and Leggit's, his exceptional indiscretion being forgiven.

As for Sam, he was a sharp shrewd fellow, well known in Chancery-lane, and he soon got another place. While, as for myself, I date from that memorable night the commencement of a successful life as low comedian on the London stage, under the new name of ——. But here my story ends.

FRENCH ETIQUETTE.

Whether with individuals or with nations, nothing tends so much to the continuance of friendship as a good understanding. Etiquette was invented so to discipline and set in order meetings and assemblies, whether great or small, that they may not be disorderly mobs. If etiquette were identical and uniform all the world over, social intercourse would roll on anti-friction wheels. All would go right, or nearly so. Frivolous grounds of ill will and quarrel would be greatly diminished. No one would have the right to take offence at a form or a usage which is stringent on everybody without exception. As it is, half the

hitches, pulls-up and stoppages which occur in society result from Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so's taking umbrage at proceedings on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Such-a-one, which Mr. and Mrs. Such-a-one never dreamt would give offence. They have unintentionally violated some rule of politeness, on which their neighbours insist, while *they* make light of it, or perhaps are ignorant of its existence.

Unfortunately, no universal Code of Etiquette exists. The rules vary in various countries. What is sufficient for the occasion here, is insufficient there. What is polite amongst Turks, is the reverse amongst Christians. Even on the north and the south shores of the Channel there are decided shades of difference to which it is worth while calling attention. We cannot doubt that our countrymen abroad are often accused of deficient amiability, when they are simply unaware of what is expected from them; and in order to prevent similar mistakes and misapprehensions, we will cite a few maxims of French politeness, as laid down by the French themselves. There are several treatises which discuss this important topic, some for the use of children, others for persons out of leading-strings. On the present occasion, our text book shall be "La Politesse Française, par E. Muller," with a few additions of our own.

With politeness, as with everything else, too much of a good thing is good for nothing. "Est modus in rebus," saith Horace. There is reason in the roasting of eggs. To overdo any observance is wearisome, when it is not ridiculous.

The world which is especially ruled by etiquette—the world of courts—affords plentiful examples of the absurdity of overstraining conventional rules. A king, surrounded by attendants, may yet have to wait barefoot, in consequence of the absence of the officer whose right it is to shoe royal feet. When Cardinal Richelieu was negotiating with the English ambassadors the marriage of Henrietta of France with our Charles I., the match was nearly broken off on account of two or three additional steps in advance to meet them, which the said ambassadors exacted. Richelieu got over the difficulty by taking to his bed.

Philip the Third of Spain, seriously ill, was sitting in his arm-chair before a fire on which an unnecessary quantity of wood was piled. As the heat became uncomfortably fierce, the king requested the Dons who were present to remove a few blazing brands from the hearth. But the grandee of Spain who enjoyed the sole privilege of laying a finger on the royal fire was absent, and had to be sent for. The king's arm-chair might have been drawn back. But the grand chamberlain alone possessed that prerogative; and the chamberlain was in default, as well as the stoker. Moreover, it is forbidden, under pain of death, to touch the person of Spanish royalty. Consequently, in virtue of court etiquette, and in the presence of his courtiers, the king was done so thoroughly brown that he died of the roasting the very next day.

Thank Heaven, in ordinary society things are not carried to such extremes. Nevertheless, it is possible for politeness to be exaggerated into affectation. Thus, it is a mark of respect to yield the precedence at the threshold of a door; but to insist too long and obstinately, becomes ridiculous. A dramatic writer concludes an act of a comedy by the entrance of two old ladies who come to call at the same house. They mutually refuse to go in first with such persistence, that the drop-scene closes on them before either will assume the precedence. Ten minutes afterwards, when the drop-scene rises, the dowagers are still at their struggle of ceremony, and it is only after a debate of several seconds that one of them makes up her mind to enter.

Certain rules of court etiquette may, perhaps, appear ridiculous, and a repugnance may be felt to conforming to them. But it is wise to pluck up courage under adverse circumstances, and to do at Rome as they do at Rome. Napoleon—whom no one will accuse of being wanting in dignity himself, or of wishing his representatives to be wanting in dignity—is reported to have said to an English envoy, who had been refused an audience by the Emperor of China because he would not prostrate himself in the manner required, "Monsieur, I should request *my* ambassador, if necessary, to lie a couple of hours on the flat of his stomach, but at any price to succeed in his mission."

The first condition of presentability in society is cleanliness. Personal neatness and mental propriety ought to march together side by side. Intellectual ability is no excuse for personal negligence. Voltaire and Cicero—a curious brace to couple—both insist on cleanliness, and both urge that it be without affectation—not carried so far as the Dutch dame's neatness, who refused to let her house be shown to Charles the Fifth, "because," she said, "he won't take off his shoes." Uncleanliness implies low-mindedness. We say of a man, "He has too much self-respect to commit a low action;" the same self-respect has its outward manifestation in personal neatness. The ancients raised it to the dignity of a virtue, under the name of self-worship, as if it were revealed by a secret religious instinct. Henry the Fourth said, "I wonder how anybody can dispense with neatness and politeness; since you can be clean with a glass of water, and polite with a lifting of the hat." His allowance of fluid is economical. A propos of the hat, be it stated that the French mode of saluting, gentlemen as well as ladies (except amongst the military), is not merely to touch the hat or cap, but to remove it completely from the head.

You ought to salute all persons of your acquaintance wherever you happen to meet them. It is bad taste to refrain from saluting an inferior until he has first saluted you. Not to return a salute, out of pride, is the proof of a silly and narrow mind. In out-of-the-way places, and in the country, it is customary to salute unknown persons whom you chance to meet. If you are walking with a friend, and he is sa-

luted by one of *his* friends, you also are bound to return the salute, though unacquainted with the person who makes it. Intimate friends salute by a motion of the hand; equals, by taking off the hat and raising it a little above the head. A lady salutes by a motion of the head, or by a slight bend of the knee, as if making a curtsey. When, after exchanging salutations, you enter into conversation with a superior or a lady, you ought, in France, to remain uncovered, hat in hand, until requested to replace it.

In general, when accosting acquaintances, it is best to avoid familiarity of manner, which sometimes savours of unpoliteness. An impudent fellow, one day meeting a grand personage and addressing him with "Good day, my friend! how do you do?" received for answer, "Good day, my friend, what's your name?"

It is not allowable to take the hand of persons you meet, except between equals, or by a superior to an inferior. When you take any one's hand, you may press it gently, but not shake it. It is unpolite to call any one loudly by name in the street.

If you ask your way, it must always be done with the most extreme politeness, taking off your hat, even when addressing persons of quite an inferior class. In obedience to the law "Do to others as you would be done by," the person so addressed is bound to supply the required information, if he can. In villages only, and the desert streets of towns, is it allowable to enter houses to make inquiries.

Calls or visits are one of the connecting links of society; they bring people together and keep up more intimate relations than could arise from mere business intercourse. We cannot, therefore, allow, with misanthropes, that calls are too wearisome, and that they ought to be abolished. They are useful and even necessary, when made judiciously and à propos. If you come to settle in a town, whether in an official capacity or for affairs, it is usual to make what is termed "a general call" on the persons with whom you have to do. In short, in France, the new comer is the *first* to call; he is expected to seek, instead of waiting to be sought. After a dinner, ball, or evening party, you should call on your entertainer within the week following. The first case is sometimes spoken of as a "visite de digestion."

You should knock or ring very gently—just sufficiently loud to be heard. In old times, it was considered "the thing" simply to scratch at the door of a great personage. At present, it might expose you to the risk of being mistaken for the house-dog. If the party on whom you call be not visible, you leave with the porter a visiting-card, folding one of the corners to show that you have left the card in person.

It is not permissible to keep people waiting who call upon you. It would be an impertinence to do so, without absolute necessity. If you are detained by any accident, you must charge another person to do the honours of the house, until you can appear and make proper excuses. Any one who acted otherwise, would expose himself to mortifying lessons. A duke, belonging to one of the first families of France, called one day on a minister, who happened to be busy arranging the books in his library. The minister, unwilling to quit his task, sent a request to the duke to wait. After the lapse of an hour, the minister deigned to show himself, saying, by way of excuse, "I had quite forgotten you, Monsieur le Duc."

"Say, rather, that you forgot yourself, Monsieur le Ministre," replied the duke.

When persons who call on you take their leave, you are bound to accompany them to the door, unless you are also receiving other visitors. If you even descend one or two of the door-steps with them, the attention is still greater. Ringing for the servant to show people out, while you remain without stirring in the drawing-room, alone, is quite opposed to French politeness, and has, probably, given frequent offence to foreigners ignorant of our habits.

The master or mistress of a house should never offer a dinner sans cérémonie. A miser once invited some people to dinner, and treated them to meagre fare. At dessert he said, "You see, my friends, I am sans cérémonie."

"Oh," replied one of the hungry sufferers, "a little ceremony does no harm."

Martainville, the author of the Pied de Mouton, accepted a dinner of the kind, and so charmed his hosts with his conversation, that, when about to take his leave, they would not let him go until he fixed a time for coming and dining with them again. "Very well, then," he said, "since you insist, I will dine with you again immediately, if you like."

Brillat-Savarin declares that the man who receives his friends without paying personal attention to the repast prepared for them, is unworthy to have friends. You are responsible for the well-being of the persons you invite, so long as they remain under your roof.

For a gentlemen's dinner you will have hot side-dishes, venison, fillet of beef, all the courses solid and succulent, plenty of roasts. No light pastry or sweets, but patés, hams, boars'-heads, and other charcuterie of celebrity. At dessert, select cheeses, brandy cherries and plums, early fruits, and a few simple sweetmeats, solely for show. A ladies' dinner is a different affair: cold side-dishes, courses of choice fish and game, plenty of delicate pastry, first-rate vegetables, Bavarian cheeses and creams perfumed à la vanille and à la rose, elaborate and elegant dessert, with bonbons varying in flavour, shape, and smell. A mixed dinner must be contrived to suit all tastes. Note well, the cheese *at* dessert, not between dinner and dessert. When you invite French friends, have at least two or three sorts of cheese on the table, each under a glass cover. The Physiologie du Goût says: "A dessert without cheese is a beauty blind of one eye." Cut the cheese offered you, lengthwise, instead of helping yourself to the pointed end.

Each napkin should be ticketed with the name of the person for whom the place is intended.

Four glasses are the indispensable escort of every knife and fork; the largest for vin ordinaire, another for choice wines, another for champagne, a fourth for the fine wines taken at dessert and with entremets. In the grandest mansions, fresh knives and forks are given with every change of plates; in second-class houses, knives and forks are changed at each course, and after fish; in many, the same knife and fork serves throughout the dinner, and are replaced by a knife only at dessert.

Before dinner, the mistress of the house should see that all arrangements are properly made. At dinner, she ought to charm everybody by her grace, attention, and friendliness. After dinner, a well-bred woman will not betray in the presence of her guests any marked uneasiness respecting what is left in the dishes. It is ridiculous for a host to show anxiety to save elaborate confectionery which may adorn the table. It is for the guest to plead for the sparing of those edifices, which are generally contrived to please the eye rather than the palate.

Bread, when once handed to you, may not be again cut, but only broken. The black-bottle question is speedly settled. Wine may *not* be decanted. The dirtier, the dustier, the mouldier, the more cobwebby, a bottle is when placed on the table, the better. It is the down of the peach, the bloom of the plum, the dew of the rosebud. You would no more remove it in any way, than you would brush off from the tip of a fresh-cut cucumber, the faded flower which is such a sore temptation to most beholders. I shall never forget the flashing glance of surprise directed at me by a distinguished savant, when I requested a servant to wipe á very grimey bottle! The only way of getting over the error, was a bold confession of insular ignorance. If wine be so old that its coat has begun to slip, a cradle-like basket is carried down to the cellar, the bottle gently removed to it without changing its horizontal position, brought up, uncorked, and so consumed without ever being set upright. Innkeepers refuse to accord the honours of the cradle to wine under a certain price. When a bottle is uncorked, and you are about to help your neighbour, it is polite to pour into your own glass the first few drops (which Italians would squirt out on the floor), before filling your neighbour's; and then afterwards to fill your own.

Eating is not so simple an act as the multitude imagine. Animals feed; man eats; clever men only, know how to eat. A novice in society, sitting opposite an old marquis whose manners bore the stamp of the highest refinement, exclaimed, "When shall I eat my soup like that gentleman?" You may know middle-class English from middle-class French, thus: the English sip soup from the *side* of their spoon, the French from the end of it, holding the utensil as if they were going to pitch it down their throat.

After eating an egg, break the shell. Never wipe a glass or a plate with your napkin, which would be an implied suspicion of your host's cleanliness. Fish must not be touched with a knife. A fork should not be laid on its back. The master of the house generally takes his place at the middle of the table; the mistress sits opposite. On either side of each are placed the most favoured guests. The right is the seat of honour. At very grand dinners the hosts do nothing. Both the dishes and the wine are served by male domestics, who name them when they offer them to the guests. At the conclusion of a dinner, beware of folding your napkin, as if you were at home. The finger-glass and mouth-rinsing custom (more to be honoured in the breach than the observance) is still unsettled and debatable.

In general, it is obligatory to spend the evening in the house where you have dined. In the case of your being compelled to retire earlier—and, for that, it is strictly necessary to have unavoidable circumstances to allege as the reason—you should give notice of it before the repast, and, on departing, manifest extreme regret. Except when he is begged to sing, or when he takes any refreshment, custom requires a gentleman to hold his hat in his hand throughout the soirée. This usage was probably invented to help awkward individuals out of the difficulty of not knowing what to do with their pendent arms.

It is only allowable in a case of the greatest intimacy to recline on a sofa or divan. In every other case you must maintain a decorous posture and attitude; that is, without the least nonchalance or free-and-easiness. A remissness which is much to be regretted, tolerates in men the crossing of their legs, even in certain ceremonious receptions. Young people will do well to abstain from a posture which is really too dragoon-like, and which, thank Heaven, ladies are never allowed to assume.

It is improper, at a soirée, to express your own opinions too loudly and decidedly. If the apartment in which you are received has its tables and chimney-pieces laden with rare and curious objects, you must abstain, according to the French code, from touching those objects. You may scarcely permit yourself to take down a volume from a book-shelf.

During long winter evenings, it is not always possible to keep up conversation, and still less to enliven it with new and interesting topics, in which case it often degenerates into backbiting. Whist and other games afford a great resource; cards are better than calumny. Card-players should manifest neither great exultation at winning, nor ill-humour at losing. A person, whose avarice was notorious, boasted of having lost a considerable sum at cards without uttering a word of complaint. "I am not surprised at it," replied a wit. "Great sorrows are dumb."

If your partner at whist be a grand personage, in case of winning you must, in France, take care not to say "I have won," or "We have won," but "You have won, monsieur," or "Monseigneur has won." Card debts are paid within twenty-four hours.

You must not crowd too closely around people who are playing at cards. A courtier so occupied had his patience tried by a short-sighted long nosed gentleman, who constantly stooped forward to see his hand. So he took out his pocket-handkerchief and wiped his troublesome neighbour's nose, exclaiming, "I beg your pardon, monsieur, but I mistook your nose for my own."

In family circles, old cards may be used; but in society, new cards are indispensable. Young ladies never play at cards, and it is bad taste for a young man to remain constantly at a card-table, when the ladies in the dancing-room are in want of partners.

In the ball-room, the fashion of the "carnet," or memorandum-book, has extended from ladies to gentlemen. As soon as the ball is open, every cavalier inscribes all the ladies who deign to favour him with a quadrille, up to the very twentieth. A dancer inviting a lady will take good care not to ask for the *pleasure* of dancing with her; he will request the *honour*. When a young man offers his hand to a lady, whether to dance or to conduct her to the piano, he ought not to present it completely open. In former days the fist was offered. Great ladies, in their châteaux, used to lean on the fists of their pages. It was by the fist that the Bishop of Marseilles conducted Madame de Sévigné when she visited the sights of that city.

Dancers never remove their gloves, do not permit themselves to squeeze a partner's hand, nor to press it against them during the waltz or the galop. When the lady desires to discontinue either of those dances, the arm is immediately withdrawn. If they are dancing with a single lady, they manifest still more reserve, and offer to hold her fan or her handkerchief if either appear in her way. The quadrille over, they present the arm, conduct her to her place, and, with a very low bow, thank her for the honour she has done them.

In France, a young lady must avoid the appearance of conversing intimately with her partner. It is uncivil, it is blamable, on the part of the gentleman to endeavour to draw her into such familiar intercourse. A gentleman should avoid dancing too frequently with the same lady; it would be remarked, and considered fatuitous and foppish. It is polite to dance occasionally with persons who are condemned by their want of charms to the terrible penalty of "doing tapestry," or figuring as wall-flowers merely. They will be grateful to you for such attentions, especially if you acquit yourself with tact.

Many persons fancy themselves obliged to appear in society; and, to meet this imaginary obligation, they submit to privations which they condemn their families to share. But they are in a false position. There is no shame in confessing to a limited income; but it is criminal to display an outward appearance of wealth at the expense of home comforts: perhaps of necessaries. Remember the verse,

Moi qui n'ai pas diné pour acheter des gauts!

(I went without my dinner to purchase gloves.)

This folly of wishing to appear what one is not, what a source is it of suffering and humiliation! And it is so easy to avoid all those torments.

Finally, it seems droll that misunderstandings should be possible respecting such simple meanings as "Yes" or "No." Nevertheless, "Thank you," in French, "Je vous remercie," means to decline politely; in English, mostly, to accept. A young lady who refuses a gentleman's offer of marriage, is said "Le remercier," to thank him for it. Therefore, my fair young readers, take care never to say "No" when you mean "Yes." To avoid all misconception, some persons, when conversing with English, take the precaution of saying, "Merci, oui," or "Merci, non."

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